







Class PZ3

Book C636 G7

Copyright N<sup>o</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

**COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT**

































In the square courtyard the fountain still leaped and splashed, the Moorish lanterns still burnt dimly between the arches, while Ali, with moans and cries of affection, knelt over his brother.—Page 56.

*The Green Turbans.*



# THE GREEN TURBANS

A NOVEL

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN



“ Give me a nook and a book,  
And let the proud world spin round.”

A. L. BURT COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,  
52-58 DUANE STREET, NEW YORK *A*



RZ 356  
C636

THE LIBRARY OF  
CONGRESS,  
TWO COPIES RECEIVED  
MAY. 28 1902  
COPYRIGHT ENTRY  
*Apr. 19. 1902*  
CLASS *a* XXc. No.  
*31223*  
COPY B.

Copyright, 1902. By A. L. BURT COMPANY.

THE GREEN TURBANS.

By J. MacLAREN COBBAN.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
PRINTED IN U.S.A.



# THE GREEN TURBANS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

HOW THE DOCTOR FOUND IN HIS HOUSE A YOUNG  
MOOR WITH A PRICE ON HIS HEAD.

“THOU accursed Christian! May Allah burn thy great-grandmother in the fires of Hell! There is not a corner of Fez, nor any part of the land of the Moors, that is free from thee and thy like!”

The speaker was a filthy Moorish beggar, with a remarkably swarthy goat-face of the lowest Arab type. He had been spread asleep in the dust, covered with a dirty white cotton garment like a sheet; and the passing mule had stumbled against his half-buried foot. He leaned upon his elbow to curse, and revealed the upper part of a brawny body, quite bare. The person he cursed, who was seated on the mule, was plainly an Englishman, and young. For coolness, he wore over a flannel shirt a loose grey alpaca coat, and on his head a wide-brimmed



Panama hat; and yet he wilted and panted in the intolerable heat. It was too much exertion to do more than lift a drooping eyelid at the cursing Moor, although he quite understood the terrible things the rascal uttered: he had heard such curses often before, and they had no effect on him. So he and his mule passed on, the creature shuffling softly and drowsily through the dust.

“Hold up, Hamed!” he murmured to the mule, and gave a gentle tug at the rein. The mule answered the tug by raising his head a few inches; and then, the moment after, he let it hang again and sway before his knees.

The young man continued his way, and presently entered a narrow alley, which was encumbered with filth and offal of all kinds, from decaying vegetable refuse to dead dogs and cats, and even dead babies. This was the mart for second-hand clothing—the Petticoat-lane of the city—and the shops were like large cupboards in the dirty, cracking walls, on the lower shelf of which the shopkeeper squatted with his goods about him. The light was dim in that stinking alley; for there were continuous awnings of withered boughs and tattered stuff overhead, through which the afternoon sunlight fell in streaks and blotches. The shopkeepers were idle and



drowsy; but, at sight of the Englishman, they looked up with the ferocious glare of bloodthirsty beasts, and, in deep murmurs, cursed his great-grandmother for all she was worth. Naked children, too, sprang from unknown corners, flung handfuls of dirt, spat, and cursed as potently as their elders. They would even have sprung like cats upon the Englishman and his mule, had he not quietly pointed at them now and again a little thing with trumpet-shaped ends. At that, with terror on their fierce little faces, they tumbled over each other in their haste to get out of the line of the magic wand—which was, in truth, nothing but a doctor's stethoscope.

"Ya!" they yelled. "He is a devil! He is Sheitan! He is an infidel magician!"

They knew him as a doctor; and the skill of the Christian doctor is always associated in the Moorish imagination with the power of deadly magic. That was why the doctor ventured to ride out alone, instead of with a protecting company of armed servants or soldiers.

Out of that nauseous tunnel he turned into an equally narrow lane between two high walls, cracked and scarred, and marked at intervals with window-slits, like loop-holes; for all Moorish houses have



their backs to the streets. Here, shuffling softly on in the thick dust, he came unexpectedly upon a lady on a mule, shuffling softly the other way. Her form and face, all save the eyes, were muffled and veiled in the native fashion, so that he did not at once recognize her. But his eye lighted on the grinning negro soldier who accompanied her, and he knew him: he was one of his brother's guards. The lady, then, must be his sister-in-law, his brother's wife.

"Hallo, Molly!" said he. "Where are you going alone, in this heat?"

Molly, his brother's wife, was not taken by surprise; for it had been quite easy for her to recognize her brother-in-law a long way off.

"Yes," said she; "it is a nuisance, isn't it, to have to come out like this? But I promised to take tea to-day with Sid Moussa's newest wife. I shan't stay long, though. Bye-bye!" And she pushed her mule on past him.

The doctor stood smiling an instant, and looking after the negro soldier proudly swaggering in the cast-off tunic of a British soldier, bought or stolen from Gibraltar; and then he woke up his mule, and went on his way, thinking that, if he had been Molly, sitting cool at home, not even an engagement to take tea with all the wives of the



Governor of Fez would have driven him forth into such heat. After a little while, in another lane, he arrived at a small door in the blank wall, and rapped on it. It was opened immediately by another negro in the discarded scarlet of the British Army. He entered, mule and all—for he was at home. This was the house he had occupied ever since his coming to Fez some months ago to take care of the health of the sick Sultan. And it was in astonishing contrast with the meanness, the squalor, and the filth he had passed through on his way from the Sultan's palace. It was, in truth, a princely mansion in the purest Moorish style. Once through the little door, you were in a small garden, shaded with rows of orange trees. Across the garden, you entered by another low door and a dark passage into the interior court; for all Moorish houses are built round a central court. And behold the court! Around it were twelve pilasters of white stucco, decorated with colored arabesques, connected with light, fretted arches of the Moorish horse-shoe shape, and supporting an arched gallery. The pavement was laid with tiny squares of enamel of brilliant colors that formed intricate patterns; and in the midst a fountain played into a basin in which swam gold and silver fish, and from the



middle of each arch depended a Moorish lantern. The court was open to the sky; so it was airy, cool, fragrant, and deliciously soothing, with the sound of plashing water. On one side of the court you might pass into a large, neglected garden; and on the other sides you entered the dwelling, sleeping, and reception-rooms of the mansion, all of which were richly decorated with arabesque work, and furnished with divans, cushions, and carpets, and innumerable little Moorish tables, some of which the Englishman used as stools, because there were no chairs.

In a large and dim reception-room, with one side almost entirely open to the court, the doctor found his brother, Captain Neale, who had come from Tangier with the English Mission then in Fez, at the head of which was the English Ambassador. But, besides his brother, he saw two young men in Moorish dress. Both were of distinguished and handsome appearance; each wore a green turban, which is, in Morocco, the distinctive mark of a Shereef—of one, that is, who claims descent from the Prophet Mohammed. Their presence made the doctor stare, and exclaim in astonishment. With his eye on the slighter, and apparently the younger of the two Moors, he spoke in English, saying:



"By all that's desperate! What are you doing here? Don't you know there's the value of five thousand pounds of English money set on your head?"

"Cousin of my heart," said the young man, speaking in Moghrebbin—which is the common or vulgar Arabic of Morocco—"well do I know that! Has not the Sultan of Marakesh published it through all the land? My fierce brother, Ali and I, Cousin Tabeeb [doctor], have ventured to ride into Fez—to within a step of the lion's mouth—and have claimed your hospitality, cousin of the curing touch."

"Cousin Mohammed," said the doctor, also in Moorish, "it is a terrible risk you run!"

"If our most renowned cousin, Richard Neale, Physician and Surgeon to the Commander of the Faithful, his Shereefian Highness the Sultan, the descendant of a Tafilet slave that usurps the shade of the sacred umbrella of Morocco—if our cousin," said the big brother, puffily, "thinks that we will ruin his hopes of advancement by staying in his house, we will go, Brother Mohammed!"

"What a touchy beast it is!" said the doctor, turning to his brother, Captain Neale, and speaking in English, because the captain's knowledge of Moorish was slight.



"Peppery as ever," said the Captain, "but a good chap."

"How long have they been here?" asked the doctor.

"About two hours," was the answer.

Then Ali, understanding the English but little, and thinking the doctor was grumbling at him and his brother, was stung to angrier offence. He sprang lightly to his feet, despite his squatting position.

"Dear Brother Mohammed," said he, fiercely, "our cousin, the Tabeeb of the accursed Sultan, is weary of our presence! We are on his hands like hot cakes! Let us go!"

Then the doctor called him names in picturesque Moorish. "You big, burning son of a box of tinder! You cross-bred lucifer! You English stick with a head of Moorish phosphorus!" (The young man was of a very red complexion.) "Sit down and listen to the words of wisdom that shall drop from my mouth!" And, under that overwhelming outburst, Ali squatted down again on the divan. "I wish to discover how to keep you from harm," continued the doctor. "Now cousins both, listen and answer. Have you come here to escape pursuit?"



"Nay, cousin doctor," answered Ali, "never, never would we——"

"Cousin Ali," said the doctor, "the question is answered, and words are precious. On what business, then, have you come?"

"Mohammed is sick," said Ali, somewhat sulkily. "He may be dying. And that is as true as Allah."

"What say you?" said the doctor, in a quicker and more sympathetic accent. "Are you ill, Mohammed? Come into the light. Let me look at you. What is your feeling?"

"I feel, cousin of my heart," said Mohammed, coming forward, "as if living creatures were gnawing and eating the marrow of my bones, and I have come, cousin, in the hope that you will doctor me."

"Certainly I will," said the doctor, and proceeded to diagnose his ailment. "My very dear Mohammed," said he, after a little while, "all your fine plans for the benefit of the Moors and the overthrow of the Bashas must be laid on the shelf for a little while, with yourself, for you must go to bed, cousin." He turned to his brother and said: "It's a pity Molly has gone out; she might have helped us."

"Has she gone out? I didn't know," said Captain Neale.



"Yes, I met her," said the doctor. Then he turned again to Ali and asked: "Did anyone see you enter this house, cousin?"

"No one at all, cousin doctor," answered Ali.

"By what ways did you come?"

"I will tell you, cousin," said Ali. "This is the truth from the beginning: We met with a caravan from Oudjda, and joined ourselves to it about thirty miles hence, giving ourselves out to be wandering shereefs on our way to Mequinez. When we came to Fez the caravan entered while we went on, as if to go to Mequinez. But we turned aside and entered the city by the gate which is not far from your garden wall, and here we came and entered unseen by any."

That explanation satisfied the doctor, whose anxiety for the safety of his guests then slackened. He settled Mohammed in his own bed, and then, in the cool half-hour before the sun should plump below the horizon (for in Morocco the sun does not gently set as in England), the doctor and Ali, and his brother and his brother's wife—who had returned from her tea-drinking with the newest spouse of the Governor of Fez—went and sat upon the flat roof of the house, which is the usual place for an evening lounge in the land of the Moors. From



their elevated position they looked far abroad upon the ancient and famous city of Fez, which was once one of the greatest and most enlightened of Arab cities, with colleges and libraries, whither flocked the scholars of Europe, but which is now one of the meanest, filthiest, and most fanatical cities on the face of the earth. Fez looks white; but it is with the white of stucco or of whitewash, not of marble. It is, in truth, a whited sepulchre crumbling to decay, like a neglected pile of ill-baked bricks in a brickyard. While the doctor and his brother smoked, Ali talked sadly (Molly, the Captain's wife, was sympathetic) of his elder brother, Mohammed, whom he adored, but who was bent on ruining himself and all his kindred with his dreams of reform among the Moors.

"But the Moors," said he, "are all pigs, and dogs, asses, mules, and hyenas—anything but what is noble or courageous, like a horse or a lion, or even a man."

"You are a great deal of a Moor yourself, Ali, remember," said the doctor.

"It is true, doctor cousin," said Ali. "But, by the favor of Allah, I hope there is more of a son of the English in me, as there is in Mohammed, than of the Moor."



The reason of which saying was this: Mohammed and Ali, although they were Moorish princes, being sons of the Grand Shereef of Tetuan, were also in deed and in truth cousins of the doctor and the Captain; for the Grand Shereef, who was by way of being a Moor without prejudice, had married a Miss Neale.

Thus they talked, the doctor withdrawing once and again to look at his patient; and then darkness fell, as with the sudden putting out of lights, and the cry of the mueddin droned through the air from the tops of the mosques, bidding all the faithful engage in prayer. "*Allah! Allah ill'-Allah! Allah-Akhbar!*" "God is great! Bend, ye faithful, bend in prayer!" it seemed to say.

The cry was yet lingering in the air, and engaging the ear, when there came a new sound—the soft thud of horses' hoofs in the thick dust of the lane—of many hoofs—of more and more. They came to a halt, and the three men fell silent and looked on each other in deadly alarm. There sounded a hammering on the outer door.

"Good God!" cried the doctor, in English, starting to his feet. "They'll get in! They *are* in! There's time to bring Mohammed up. Stay here," he said in Moorish to Ali. "You can do no good by coming down."



So while Ali with Molly remained still and silent on the roof, the doctor and his brother passed swiftly down the little staircase to find Mohammed. The court below was filling with soldiers in turbans, big negroes of the Sultan's bodyguard, who were chattering loudly, and flashing lanterns around. The doctor hastened on. Arrived at his own bedside, he gave Mohammed a quick scrutiny by the light of the lamp which he had placed there some minutes before.

"We must carry him," said he to his brother.

"Then I will," said the Captain. "I'm stronger than you, and he's light enough. Besides, there's no room for us both along there."

So the Captain took Mohammed in his arms, who moaned that he could walk if they would let him, and with the doctor softly and swiftly leading, they passed out upon the gallery. Their move was made none too soon; for the rooms below and on their level were filling with noisy soldiery. But escape was still possible for the two Moors, for, once on the roof, Mohammed and Ali both might be dropped on the outer side into the dark and tangled garden.

The perilous part of their passage to the roof was along that gallery which looked upon the court,



and which was not many feet above the heads of the crowd of soldiers. The greater part of it was accomplished when a raised lantern in the hands of a prying soldier revealed the Captain with the sheet-wrapped form of Mohammed in his arms. Then there was a clamor. "Lo, there! There he is!" and a command in the Moorish speech.

"Halt there! Or I fire!"

"Down with you! Crouch!" cried the doctor.

But the Captain held on, saying: "What does the nigger say? I don't understand his cursed lingo!"

At the same instant came the explosion of a shot.

The Captain gasped, "My God!" stopped, reeled, and—before the doctor could do anything to hinder—crashed through the wooden railing of the gallery and fell into the court, with Mohammed still in his arms; while from the roof there sounded the horrified shriek of a woman, and the deep, raging cry of a man.



## CHAPTER II.

## HOW ALI RESOLVED TO GO TO THE SULTAN.

IN another second the doctor had swung himself from the gallery down into the court.

“Stand away!” said he, in Moghrebbin; and all the soldiers obeyed, for they knew him. A clear space was left around the two bodies, and a big mulatto officer, who appeared to be the Kaid, or Captain, of the troop. The Kaid waited in silence, while the doctor examined his brother, who was quite dead (in his fall he had flung out and hit his head upon the rim of the basin of the fountain, so that at the moment it was difficult to tell whether he was dead of a broken skull or by the gun-shot), and then he turned to the half-stunned Mohammed. He aided him to sit up.

“Ai!” said Mohammed, looking around him in a half-dazed fashion, and noting the soldiers, “it is me they seek, is it not, cousin of my heart? There



is an end. Alas! my poor people! But the will of Allah be done."

"Hush!" murmured the doctor. Then he stood up, and gave his attention to the mulatto Kaid, who still deferentially waited, because, by the beard of the Prophet! this was no less a person than the Sultan's own Tabeeb, and a dealer in magic, to boot. "Wherefore," demanded the doctor, indignantly, "have ye broken into my peaceful house, like thieves in the night?"

"By command of our lord the Sultan, whom Allah preserve!" said the Kaid, producing a bit of sealed parchment, and pressing it with reverence to his forehead.

"And what is the Sultan's command, son of a Kaid?" asked the doctor.

"It is, Sidi Tabeeb, to find and bring the young man who is known as Sidi Mohammed Shereef, eldest son and heir of his Saintliness the Grand Shereef and Lord of Tetuan."

"And where is he?" asked the doctor.

"Lo, Sidi Tabeeb," answered the Kaid, with a broad grin, "here he is!"

"You know him, then?" said the doctor.

"Never before, Sidi Tabeeb, has the sight of him refreshed my eyes," said the Kaid; "but well I know



this is he. I must take him away to our lord the Sultan's presence."

"But he is very sick," said the doctor. "You see he has but come from his bed."

"Well or ill, Sidi Tabeeb," said the Kaid, "I must take him, or pay with my head."

At that he made a motion with his hand, and two soldiers instantly sprang upon Mohammed.

Resistance, in such a case, the doctor knew, would be the extreme of folly and madness. He stood back a step. The soldiers were eager to bind their prisoner; but he said, with great gentleness and dignity:

"What need is there to bind a weak, sick man? I will go with you."

"Tell me this one thing, Kaid," said the doctor; "how did you or the Sultan know that he was here?"

"Nothing, Sidi Tabeeb, is hid from our lord the Sultan," said the Kaid; and that was all he would say.

And so, with little more ado, Mohammed was carried off prisoner, and set upon a horse of one of the soldiers. And the doctor saw him go, with rage and resentment in his heart; but his rage and resentment, he knew, he must keep down, for to



defy the Sultan's authority, and in fanatical Fez of all places, would only bring destruction upon himself and those in his house, and perhaps even upon the English Mission which was then in the city. Then, in a new turn of feeling, he thought of his widowed sister-in-law. While he could not be too thankful that neither she nor Ali had appeared, he wondered why they had not.

Leaving his terrified servants to look upon the form of his dead brother, the doctor hurried up to the roof. He felt that he had passed through a year of feeling since he had come from there, though he knew that the actual time could be no more than a few minutes. He found the little door that opened upon the roof shut fast. He tapped on it; but his tapping was not heeded. He listened, and heard the voice of Molly, his sister-in-law.

"I will not! I will not!" she was saying, in a passionate voice. "It is too bad as it is! I will not see any more horrible deaths! Would your dying bring alive those that are dead? I will not let you pass!" And that she protested over and over again. "I will *not* let you pass! No, I won't!"

The doctor rapped more loudly, and called: "It's me, Molly!"

Then the door was opened, and Molly stood



panting. She was a fair, plump, pretty little woman, with the full, timid eyes of a fawn, although it was evident she could be resolute and courageous when occasion demanded.

"You know what has happened, Molly?" said the doctor.

"Is he dead?" asked Molly, with her hands tight on her bosom.

"Yes; he is," answered the doctor.

"Oh, dear, dear me!" moaned Molly, with her fingers pressed upon her eyes. "I saw him fall! It was horrible!"

"Would you like to come down and see him now?" asked the doctor. "In this hot climate, you know——"

His meaning was plain, without his saying more.

"Oh, no, Richard!" she said, with a shudder. "No! I can't see him! I can't! It would be too horrible!"

The doctor wondered a little that she, who had seemed so courageous a moment ago, and who had always appeared so fond of her husband, should refuse to look upon that husband now, even for an instant, although he was dead and disfigured.

"Won't you give him just one last look, Molly?" he urged.



"No, Richard, I won't!" she cried, in a strenuousness of terror. "Please, don't ask me! Nothing will induce me! It will be far nicer, too, won't it, to remember him only as he was—strong, and handsome, and beautiful?"

The doctor desisted from pressure; but he said to himself that there was no understanding the subtle movements of a woman's mind—when she has one. But she has one oftener than a simple-minded doctor may think: he is too commonly taken up with the troubles of the body to concern himself much with the workings of the mind.

With the innate politeness of the well-bred Moor, Ali, gathering that the doctor talked of his brother, forbore to interrupt, despite his impatience to hear of his own brother. But when the doctor fell silent, then he broke in.

"And Mohammed, Cousin Tabeeb? What of him?" he asked, in his Moorish speech. "Doth he also lie dead below?"

"Mohammed, Cousin Ali," answered the doctor, sadly, "is the Sultan's prisoner; he has been carried off by the soldiers."

Then Ali turned upon Molly in a paroxysm of fury, and overwhelmed her with reproaches, of which, fortunately, it was only the sound that ter-



rified her, for she failed to understand the words fully.

"Woman," he cried, "what had you to do with me to keep me from my brother? What have I done to you that you should be my enemy, and defeat the dearest desire of my heart—even to die for my brother? He was young, weak, my dear brother Mohammed—more beautiful and tender to me than a man's first bride! And you!—you white, smiling, accursed devil!—you have separated me from him!"

"Come, Cousin Ali! Silence! This is folly—madness!" said the doctor.

"Ai, my English cousin!" cried Ali. "You have not this molten fire of the Moor coursing and burning in your veins!"

"Tell him," said the trembling Molly, "that it is surely better he should still be alive and free to go on with his brother's work; and tell him that, after all, his brother is only a prisoner—he's not dead. Tell him that, Richard."

Richard hung silent a moment, as if hesitating to tell him "that." But Ali demanded to be told.

"What does she say?" he asked.

The doctor told him.

"And what," cried Ali, "is Mohammed's work



without Mohammed? It was my brother I loved, not his work! Oh, my heart is very sore for my brother! Would to God I were with him, wherever he is! Yes, I shall be with him! I shall go and find him, even in the presence of the Fileli usurper, him you call the Sultan! And know you," he demanded, turning again fiercely upon Molly, "what it means to be your Sultan's prisoner? It means that my brother is at your Sultan's mercy! It means that your Sultan will play with him as a cat plays with a bird before he eats him up! That is to be your Sultan's prisoner! I forgive you that you do not know!"

The doctor, at Molly's demand, faithfully translated; and it showed to what a pass she was reduced that she found nothing to say but:

"He's not my Sultan!"

"Yes," said Ali; "ai! ai! It would have been far better that my brother had died here with me, fighting your Sultan's soldiers!"

"Cousin Ali," said the doctor, losing patience, "you roar like the veriest moon-calf seeking his mother! What is your loss to mine—to hers? I have a brother dead—dead to save your brother! You have a brother living—even though a prisoner! And a living dog is better than a dead lion!"



"Cousin Dr. Richard," said Ali, stooping on the impulse and pressing the doctor's hand to his forehead, "you speak the words of wisdom. I forget! I am a pig—a beast filled with the hot rancor of ingratitude! But, cousin of my heart, I am truly enraged with myself, because it was I that brought Mohammed here—compelled him to come—to be cured by you!"

"Listen to me calmly, Ali," said the doctor. "The hospitality of my house is a sacred thing, and not even the Sultan shall break in upon it without question. At once I shall go to Sir Edward, our English Ambassador, and urge him to interfere with the Sultan; for both Mohammed and you are half-English. But first I should like to have a notion how the Sultan knew you were here."

To emphasize it, he said it both in Moorish and in English.

"Oh, what can that matter?" moaned Molly.

They did not heed her moan.

"He did not know *I* was here," said Ali, "or else the soldiers would have demanded me also; for I have never been separated from Mohammed."

"Then," said the doctor, "you do not think that ye were seen entering this house?"

"Cousin Dr. Richard," said Ali, "no outside creature saw us enter, not even a bird on the wall."



"And yet, Ali," persisted the doctor, "your brother was either seen or informed upon: that is certain."

"What matters now?" said Ali. "Allah will declare in his own time who has been the betrayer of innocent blood! Meanwhile, I go to the Sultan to offer myself in Mohammed's place: I can endure torture better than he!"

"That is the merest folly of madness, Ali!" said the doctor.

"*I am* mad, cousin doctor!" said Ali. "Therefore, hinder me not. I go."

"This is too horrible!" said the doctor. "I shall go at once to Sir Edward."

"And what is to become of poor me?" moaned Molly, when she understood his purpose.

"I doubt, Molly," said the doctor, "you must stay here. I think, my dear," said he, with some severity, "the actual danger of death is more to be thought of than the mere funk of it. And there are plenty of servants about to keep you company."

Ali and the doctor went out together: Ali to the Sultan's palace, and the doctor to the palace where the English Ambassador was lodged. The doctor did not find Sir Edward at his lodging: he was dining at the Sultan's palace, the servants of the



Embassy said; and the doctor hurried off to find him. It was a longish way to go on foot; but the moon had risen, and made everything mysteriously visible. When he inquired for the English Ambassador, he was referred to the Sultan's chief Chamberlain, Sidi Borghash, a white-bearded old man, with the keen face of a bird of prey, but the soft, cooing manners of a dove.

"Welcome! Welcome! A thousand times welcome, good Sidi Tabeeb!" he cooed, and pressed the doctor's hand in both his. "You seek the Bashador? Have the goodness, most noble sidi, to accompany my poor feeble steps, and in process of time you will arrive at the Bashador."

The Bashador, said the old man, was dining in a garden pavilion; and he led on by galleries and cages, where the strong pungent odor told that the Sultan's menagerie was kept. Then they came, by some way the doctor had not known before, into the garden. Suddenly he found himself on the brink of a great cemented pit, some ten feet deep, and forty wide and long. From the pit came a hissing like the subdued escape of steam. There white-draped figures—black soldiers in white mantles, who looked in the moonlight like ghosts—stalked slowly about the margin of the pit, while in the pit itself—



"Great God!" exclaimed the doctor, stuck still with horror.

There, in the pit, flooded with moonlight, were two naked men, fastened to stakes about six feet apart. They were plainly fastened to the stakes by a big nail driven into the right hand high above the head, while the left was free to battle with the scores and hundreds of serpents of all sizes and colors that hissed and writhed around them. It was a sight that held the doctor spellbound—a spell all the greater that in the two men he clearly recognized his cousins, Mohammed and Ali!



## CHAPTER III.

## WHAT THE DOCTOR SAW IN THE PIT OF SERPENTS.

THE doctor stood and gazed into the horrible pit. His first impulse was to leap in, to beat off the serpents, and by any means—what means he knew not—to release the brothers from their frightful situation of torture. But on his first motion, as of a bird to fly, the old Chamberlain laid a detaining hand on him, and one of the white sentinels came swiftly up and laid a hand on him, too.

“Let me go!” cried the doctor, wildly, with his eyes fixed on the horrors of the pit.

“Sidi Doctor,” said the polite old Moor, “do you desire to die also? What will it avail your friends in that pit of hissing death that you should join them? Rather, haste your lingering feet that they may bring you to the presence of the Ambassador. Who can tell but that his prayers and thine may prevail on our lord the Sultan to recall his just sentence upon the rebellious brothers?”



Yet the doctor lingered a moment longer, fascinated by what was before him. In silence he stood and gazed; and the sound of the writhing and rearing and hissing serpents rose to his ears like the simmering of a gigantic caldron.

The shaven heads of the brothers gleamed in the moonlight; but, while Mohammed's drooped upon his breast, Ali's was held proudly up. Ali gave little heed to the serpents squirming and darting about himself. With a swing of his leg he would sweep them aside; but his attention was given to keeping the horrible and deadly reptiles off his brother. He could not reach Mohammed with his free hand, but gripping a snake by the throat, he swung it like a switch and beat off now one and now another that reared its obscene head against Mohammed. From the swither of coiling forms the doctor saw the most ghastly of all venomous snakes—the Cerastes—rear itself to strike. There was no mistaking it. Of a dead, dirty-white color, and with two horns over its eyes, its appearance was most terrific and appalling.

"Ah!" gasped the doctor, as the creature slowly raised itself before Mohammed. But Ali saw it too. With a swing of his snake-switch he swept the horrible, white, horned serpent away. At the same



instant there appeared over Mohammed's shoulder a small, black snake, which the doctor guessed to be that called "The Father of Swelling," and which is accounted by the Moors the most deadly of all serpents. With another swing of his strange switch Ali whipped it from its place, but at the same time he made his brother start under the blow.

In that moment of seeing, the doctor had seen enough to fill him with horror and loathing, and he turned swiftly away.

"Where is the Ambassador?" he demanded of the old Chamberlain.

"The sidi has seen enough?" grinned the toothless old rascal. "Great is the terror of our lord the Sultan. Come, sidi."

"Yes," gasped the doctor. "Your land seems filled with nothing but horrors and terrors."

"God is great," said the old man, "and men are wicked; and our lord the Sultan, the Commander of the Faithful, is the agent of God's justice."

"Even so," said the doctor. "And who, O wise counsellor, is the agent in this land of God's mercy?"

At that the old Chamberlain smiled and gurgled, as if it were a good joke.

He led on through the garden, now in a wilderness of roses, the sweet scent of which so loaded



the air and so overpowered the senses of the doctor that he was ready to weep, and then in a small tangled forest of orange and lemon trees. As he stumbled after the old Chamberlain, who appeared to be acquainted with every path, even the most neglected, of the royal garden, the doctor sighed and lamented to himself in the words of the old hymn: "Where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile!"

By-and-by they came upon a scene which might have been imitated from the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Overlooking an artificial lake in which gold and silver fish leaped and swam, and on which reposed a small and elegant electric yacht—the Sultan's latest toy from Europe—was a gay pavilion lighted with colored Moorish lanterns, and filled with a festive company in European dress or in British uniforms.

"Lo!" said the Chamberlain, coming to a halt. "The Ambassador and the sons of the English who are of his company."

The doctor also paused and looked. The colored lights of the pavilion swam reflected in the water, floated steadily, or flickered into serpentine wriggles and coils, which recalled to him the horrible pit from which he had come. Sounds of talk and



laughter were wafted on the scented breeze across the water; and to and fro, in and out of the light, passed lines of black slaves bearing high great covered dishes of kous-kousoo, like small haystacks, or carrying piles of dirty plates.

That was the Sultan's banquet to the English special Embassy; but the Sultan himself was not there. It was the etiquette of the Moorish Court that the Commander of the Faithful should not eat in company. As the doctor looked and listened, he felt it somewhat bitterly that these, his fellow-countrymen, should continue their festivity all unaware of the horrors that had been, and were being, enacted so near at hand. His house had been outraged, broken in upon, by the Sultan's emissaries; his brother (who should have been sitting down in that very company before him) was lying dead in his blood; and—great Heavens!—the two noble brothers were still fighting naked for their lives, nailed to stakes in the horrid pit of serpents! These meditations occupied but a second or two.

"Lead on, Sidi Chamberlain," said he to the old courtier.

"I am at the orders of the Sidi Doctor," said the other, and shuffled off round the lake to approach the pavilion. Arrived within the circle of its light, the doctor went forward alone.



"Holloa!" exclaimed the Ambassador, catching sight of the figure in light flannels and Panama hat. "Can it be Dr. Neale?"

"It is, Sir Edward," said the doctor, stepping forward and taking off his hat to the company, who straightway all fell silent.

"Good Heavens, man!" said Sir Edward. "You look upset! Has anything happened?"

"There is one of your company missing, Sir Edward," said the doctor.

The Ambassador glanced quickly down the table.

"Yes," said he, "your brother. We thought he was passing the evening with you."

"He will pass no more evenings, Sir Edward," said the doctor, "with anyone!"

"What! Dead?"

"Dead?" echoed all down the table.

"Yes; dead, sir!" answered the doctor. "Shot!"

"Good Heavens! How did that happen?"

The doctor told his story; and the sense of evil tidings so pervaded the air that even the Moorish slaves, who could understand no word of what was said, were drawn into the circle of light and stood stock still in wonder like black images, while the two or three high officials present listened acutely, and presently asked for an interpretation. As the



doctor continued his story, and told of the present plight of the brothers, Mohammed and Ali, the countenances of the Ambassador and the company became more fixed and white, and the slaves stood in wider-mouthed astonishment.

"This is a very serious business," said the Ambassador, looking hard at his finger nails, and then out upon the calmly shimmering waters. "Most serious!"

"We must get the poor beggars out of that serpent-pit at once, Sir Edward, mustn't we?" said a soldier down the table. "They may be dead even now!"

"They may," said the doctor.

"We must, we can, do nothing of the sort," said Sir Edward, resolutely. "Do you remember where we are? Ten or a dozen of us British in the Sultan's own grounds, surrounded by thousands of native troops and in the midst of a swarming population raging with fanaticism."

"I'd engage," murmured the officer, "to hold the whole confounded palace with half a company of British soldiers!"

"Yes," said the Ambassador, almost angrily. "But where's your half company? Don't be a fool! If anything is to be done, it must be by careful, diplomatic persuasion."



"Meantime, Sir Edward," said the doctor, "the diplomatic persuasion of the serpents may have anticipated you."

"I can't help that," said Sir Edward. "I'm not God Almighty! I don't hold Sultans and serpents in the hollow of my hand! Why the dickens," he cried, slapping the table, "must those two boys go rebelling against their Sovereign?"

"I believe, Sir Edward," said the doctor, craftily, "it's the English blood in them."

"By George!" exclaimed the officer down the table, "if I were a native of this confounded ole-clo', down-at-heel country, I'd rebel a hundred times a week!"

"Yes," said Sir Edward, "they are, of course, half English; but, all the same, they are only subjects of the Sultan. Well," he added, of a sudden, "I'll try and get an audience of the Sultan."

He rose, while the Moorish officials looked expectant; he tightened his mouth grimly under his grey moustache, and said to the doctor, "Yes; and you'd better come along, too." He went and laid a persuasive hand upon the master of the ceremonies.

"Sidi Morghem," said he, softly, to the official, "the wise, prudent, and famous Sidi Doctor has



a word of joy and a draught of comfort to administer to your lord the Sultan, whom Allah preserve! Give yourself the trouble of leading the way, and us the unutterable privilege of following in your steps."



## CHAPTER IV.

## IN THE SULTAN'S PRESENCE.

THE Ambassador was risking a great deal in thus seeking out the Sultan at that late hour. We in Europe, and especially in England, may think very little of the Sultan of Morocco now that his kingdom has become so shabby, so disreputable, and so weak; but still he is the head of what was once a great and powerful Empire; he is the only Mohammedan Sovereign of any account in Africa, and, as a descendant of the Prophet, and the African head of the Mohammedan faith, he believes himself without a peer in the whole world. He, therefore, quite naturally thinks it very condescending and very affable in himself to exchange a civil word with Christians—unbelievers—from Europe, however great their station may be; and his people think so, too. It was this ignorant and half-barbarous potentate that the Ambassador was thus running the risk of deeply offending by visiting him unbidden, and



at that improper hour. Sir Edward did not, of course, care a pin's point on his own account, if the Sultan should be angry; but he did care a great deal on account of his country. He had come to Fez on a very delicate mission, which he hoped to carry to a successful issue. He ought (as he told himself) to avoid doing anything that might tempt failure in that mission, and yet there he was deliberately entering upon a private enterprise which might provoke the Sultan's hostility and ruin all his public business. But how could he sit still and leave the two English Moors to their horrible fate, without some effort to save them? He was a man as well as a diplomatist; and he was convinced that his Queen and his country would approve of his conduct whatever might be the consequences.

"Can't you invent any pleasant reason for this?" said the Ambassador to the doctor. "I mean a reason for your own appearance. Haven't you got a pill or a potion about you that you can say you brought in haste for him to try?"

"No," said the doctor; "I have nothing of the kind about me. I suppose, Sir Edward, you have nothing of the kind either?"

"I have some smokers' cachous," said the Ambassador. "How will they do?"



"The very thing!" said the doctor. "They are small, and they look pretty. He is always complaining of impaired virility. I'll tell him these will strengthen him."

"But they won't!" said the Ambassador.

"I'm not so sure," said the doctor; "for he'll believe they will."

Through one elegant arched court and chamber after another they were ushered, ever more and more reluctantly, by huge black eunuchs and chamberlains, scowling in self-importance, and through companies of armed slaves, with guns and sabres in their hands and daggers in their waistbands. At length they arrived in an elegant chamber, where they were bidden to wait. It was very bare, as all Moorish rooms are to English notions of furnishing; for it had nothing but here and there a silken cushion, or pile of cushions, on a divan that was on one side. But the fretted wall and the tessellated floor were exquisite in their coloring, and all was softly illuminated by two very beautiful Moorish lanterns of silver filigree, set with tinted glass.

Presently a green brocade curtain over a horse-shoe doorway was swept aside. There entered a huge negro in a yellow-and-red garment like a shirt, and bearing a great gleaming scimitar, fol-



lowed by a handsome, dignified, sad-eyed man, dressed all in white: white robes of soft woollen material, and white turban. He was the Sultan. He carried no weapon, not even a dagger; but the two officers of his household who followed him carried about their persons a whole arsenal.

"Welcome! Welcome!" said he, in a weary, cold voice, while the Ambassador and the doctor made courtly bows, and uttered the regular greeting:

"May Allah prolong the days of your Highness!"

"I would," said the Sultan, seating himself among the cushions of the divan, "that Allah would shorten the nights. But He makes them longer than the days, till I cry like a child for the morning light."

That seemed to the doctor his opportunity. He produced the little box of cachous which the Ambassador had given him.

"Therefore have I brought in haste, your Highness," said he, "this new medicine, of which I have bethought me."

"The knowledge and wisdom of the Sidi Doctor," said the Sultan to the Ambassador, "are beyond comparison!"

"If," said the doctor, "your Highness will smoke a small pipe of kief, and afterwards allow one or two of these little globules to melt in your mouth, then,



by the blessing of Allah, you may have sound sleep."

"Is that indeed so, good Sidi Doctor?" said the Sultan.

But, knowing the daily and deadly dangers amid which his life was passed—dangers from violent weapons or subtle poisons—the Sultan was suspicious of the new remedy. He held out his hand for the little box; and then, when he had looked at the cachous, and seen them shining like tiny drops of quicksilver, he made a crafty proposal.

"The Ambassador of the Great Queen," said the Sultan, smiling, "and you, Sidi Doctor, will be so good as sit with me and smoke a pipe also, and show me how to swallow these afterwards, will you not?"

Both the Ambassador and the doctor knew the meaning of the invitation: it was an ordinary courtesy which they could not refuse, to show that they were not seeking to poison the Sultan. And yet how could they thus waste time, while the two young Moors were still in the last extremity in that fatal pit?

"Although we need nothing to make us sleep, your Highness," said the Ambassador, "in the sweet air of the wonderful and renowned city of Fez, we



accept with joy the gracious invitation of your Majesty." Whereupon one of the armed attendants clapped his hands, and a black slave appeared to take the order for pipes of kief. "But, your Majesty," continued the Ambassador, "will forgive us if we smoke but little of the kief." (Kief is an intoxicating drug like opium, made from hemp.)

"Wherefore, O Ambassador?" asked the Sultan, with a spark of new suspicion in his eye.

"Because, your Majesty, our English stomachs are not used to so potent a drug, and we have business of moment yet to do."

The Sultan probably considered that, not the kief, but the strange little pillule was on its trial, and he said:

"It is well. So be it. But wherefore business so late, Ambassador? The day is for business; the night is for relaxation of sleep."

"The business of Death, O Commander of the Faithful," said the Ambassador, solemnly, "knows neither times nor seasons; and that is the business that concerns us to-night and concerns your Highness also."

"Death? How mean you, Ambassador?" demanded the Sultan, with a furrowed frown.

"Your Majesty," cried the doctor, the anguish



of his loss suddenly coming over him, "my brother is dead—shot in my house by the soldiers of your Majesty!"

The countenance of the Sultan gathered and darkened with wrath. "And who, Sidi Doctor," he demanded, "has dared to thus outrage the hospitality which I have given you?"

"It will be well, your Majesty," said the Ambassador, "that you should now hear all the tale that the Sidi Doctor has to tell; for, as your Majesty should know, the dead brother of the Sidi Doctor was a soldier, and a member of my suite. This, your Majesty, is a serious thing that has happened. The Embassy of Her Majesty Queen Victoria has been attacked and outraged in the person of this soldier, the Sidi Doctor's brother."

At that serious and firm tone the Sultan began to look troubled. He clasped and unclasped his hands, and said at length: "Tell your tale, Sidi Doctor."

The doctor then told exactly what had happened. His finding of Mohammed and Ali in his house—"Could I, your Majesty," he asked, "turn them out? They are my cousins, although they have offended their lord, your Highness, whom Allah preserve!")—the sickness of Mohammed, and then the coming of the Moorish soldiery, and the capture of Mohammed, with the death of Captain Neale.



"This," said the Sultan, looking more and more troubled—for he quite well understood how serious for him the British Government might make the death of Captain Neale—"this is the foolish, head-strong work of that son of a jackass, the Kaid, who commanded the soldiers!"

But the Ambassador kept him to the point.

"Doubtless," said he, "the Kaid but carried out his orders, your Majesty? Whose orders were they?"

"It is true," said the Sultan. "He must have received his orders from the Governor of the City, Sid' Moussa."

"But, your Highness," persisted the Ambassador, "the soldiers came from this, your own royal Palace, and brought their prisoner here."

"Then," said the Sultan—prepared, in his usual way, to let anyone be blamed rather than take the responsibility himself—"the orders must have been given by my minister, the Sid' El Helba. I will speak to him about it. I will scold him."

Just then three black slaves brought in the three pipes of kief. One was passed to the Sultan, and one to each of his visitors. A fourth slave, bearing a small brazier of glowing charcoal, was about to give a light, beginning with the Sultan. But his



visitors knew that if ever he inhaled the smoke of the narcotic drug, their business would be at an end with him that night.

"Suffer me, your Majesty," said the Ambassador, "to say one word more before the pipe of kief is put to your lips. These young men, the sons of the Grand Shereef of Tetuan, are condemned to a horrible death."

"They deserve to burn in the lowest deeps of Gehenna!" exclaimed the Sultan, in wrath. "They are sons of rebellion, and they lead astray the people. They would turn this land upside down. It is fit that they die!"

"But they are young, your Majesty," urged the Ambassador; "and because they are young, their heads are filled with foolish maggots. There are many such young men, your Majesty, in the land of the English."

"And does not your great Queen Victoria, or her ministers, put them to death?"

"By no means," said the Ambassador. "They are left alone; they grow older; their maggots die, and they are as other men. The Queen of the English, your Majesty, will wonder and grieve when she shall hear that these two foolish young men are dead, as well as her own servant and soldier, the



Sidi Doctor's brother. She will wonder and grieve the more that they also are partly sons of the English; for your Majesty knows that their mother was a daughter of the English."

"You desire me, O Ambassador," said the Sultan, in a flash of understanding, "to spare the lives of these young men!"

"I am certain, your Majesty," said the Ambassador, "that it will give joy to the heart of Queen Victoria to know that these young men have received your gracious forgiveness."

"I will tell you what I will do, Ambassador," said the Sultan. "I will even do this: I will present them to the Sidi Doctor. They may be a compensation for the death of his brother; but he must send them away to the land of the English to dwell with the other rebellious young men who are permitted to grow old. They must no longer dwell in this land."

Then the Ambassador and the doctor both thanked the Sultan for his clemency.

"Will your Highness," said the impatient doctor, "permit me to go to their release? They are in the pit of serpents. They may be dead by now!"

"They are in the hands of God, Sidi Doctor," said the Sultan. "It is necessary that you wait



for a paper of release for them." He gave an order to one of the armed attendants to go and bring a secretary with a parchment and an inkhorn. "And," he added, smiling on the doctor, "till the secretary appears, we may smoke our pipe of kief, for I have need of sleep."

The doctor groaned in spirit, for he saw the precious moments slipping away, while Mohammed and Ali were still at the mercy of the serpents. But it was impossible to rebel against the Sultan's decision, or to postpone longer the smoking of the pipes of kief. The waiting slave with the small brazier of charcoal was called forward. He took up a glowing coal with a pair of pincers, blew upon it through his black lips, and held the light for the Sultan; and then he did the same for the Ambassador and the doctor.

A few whiffs of the drug are sufficient, commonly, to induce stupefaction. The Ambassador and the doctor, who themselves blew the fumes outward (for they had no desire to sleep then), watched the effect upon the Sultan with the greatest anxiety. They both understood, without speaking of it, that if the Sultan succumbed to sleep then, they were further from their purpose than ever. The Sultan's eyes were fixed on them, while his pipe glowed, and



thin blue smoke curled about his turban. His eyelids began heavily to droop. He was sliding away into sleep!

And the secretary was not come!

"Slave!" murmured the Sultan, "another pipe. It soothes; it makes happy."

"Your Majesty!" cried the doctor, determined that the Sultan should not become unconscious if he could hinder it, "now is the time for the little silver pills."

"True," said the Sultan, "the silver drops. You swallow first, Sidi Doctor."

The doctor put two cachous in his mouth, and so did the Ambassador; and then the box was handed to the Sultan. He had barely put his two in his mouth when he sank drowsily among his cushions.

"I can't stand any more of this," said the doctor aside to the Ambassador.

He rose to his feet, passed quickly over to the Sultan. And no one of the attendants said him nay, for was he not the Sidi Doctor who had the health of the Sultan in his keeping? But what was the doctor doing? Under pretence of settling the Sultan better in his cushions, he secretly and deftly slipped the signet ring from his finger.

"He sleeps," he whispered to the attendants.



"Wait ye, and watch here with him." Then, turning to the Ambassador, he said, in English: "Now I'm going to those poor wretches fighting with the serpents."

"But," said the Ambassador, "you have no authority for their release."

"I have," said the doctor. "The Sultan's ring. That should be good enough."

"Good Heavens!" said the Ambassador. "What have you done? There will be trouble over this."

"I can't help it," said the doctor; "I could wait no longer. I'm only afraid we've waited too long already."

They passed out and onwards through ante-chambers into an outer court, where they found the old Chamberlain waiting for them. The doctor showed the Sultan's ring, and said that was for the release of the two young men in the serpent pit. The Chamberlain pressed it to his forehead, and led the way in all haste and in an ominous silence to the pit.

As they approached they saw that the moonlight still flooded it, and the trees around, and the remoter buildings. As they drew nearer they saw that the brink of the great pit was bare; the white sentinels were gone. When they got nearer still they



gazed in silent amazement—the Chamberlain seemed as amazed as the Englishman—for there was nothing in the pit, nothing at all save the two stakes, to show that what the doctor had seen half an hour before had been more than a horrid vision.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE MYSTERY OF THE PIT.

“WAS it really here you saw them?” asked the Ambassador, turning a doubtful eye upon the doctor.

“In this very place!” answered Dr. Neale. “There are the stakes!”

“But where are the serpents?” asked the Ambassador. The doctor helplessly shook his head; and the Ambassador repeated the question in Moorish to the Chamberlain.

“Sidi Ambassador,” said the old man, “the master of the snakes has called them with music back into their holes”; and he pointed to little openings with which the walls of the pit were honeycombed at the base, and which were only notable when pointed out.

“Where then are the young men?” demanded Sir Edward. “They cannot be devoured?”

“It is not possible!” said the old man, still gazing



into the pit in helpless wonder. "But they may have been spirited away by Djins!"

"Not by Djins, Sidi Chamberlain," laughed a strange voice behind them; "by an angel—a divine angel from the skies—a messenger from Allah!"

They turned all three, and discovered a young man, elegantly made, though not very tall, with curled moustaches, and an odd medley of Franco-Moorish and French uniform. He bowed with great self-assurance to the Ambassador and the doctor. They knew him. He was a Frenchman from Algeria, who had come to Morocco to teach the Moors the use of modern artillery; he had been some years in the service of the Sultan, and he was commonly known as the Kaid (or Captain) of the moustachios. He was a favorite with all who knew him; and it was with relief and pleasure that both the Ambassador and the doctor greeted him.

"Ah, Captain de Courcel," said the Ambassador, in French, "perhaps you can tell us what has really happened."

"Oh, yes, *Monsieur l'Ambassadeur*," answered the Frenchman, with a smile and an outspreading of his hands, "I can tell. It is just as I have said. An angel came—a houri from Paradise, with a magic ring—and all obeyed her! The Kaid of the



snakes called off his loathsome reptiles; and the men on guard descended with a ladder into the pit, drew out the nails from the sufferers' hands, brought them up, and carried them away!"

"What deuced nonsense!" exclaimed the doctor.

"Truly, *Monsieur le Docteur*," said the Frenchman (who understood English), "it is as I have said. But, sir," he added, impressively, "I think I perceived that the angel—the houri—came from the house of the great Basha, the Sid' El Helba, and, sir, I think also you will find my little story true if you will go to your house; for when the two sufferers were put into the litter—yes, sir, there was a litter—I heard the angel—the houri—say to the attendants: 'Take them to the house of the English doctor.' And there, sir, I do not doubt that they are."

"Is this possible?" said the doctor, turning to the Ambassador.

"Well," answered the Ambassador, "they're not here; and they *may* be at your house. We had better go and see."

With that conclusion the doctor could not but agree. And in a little while the two, with four Moorish runners as guardian police and linkmen, were riding to the doctor's house.



On the way, in one of the narrow, filthy lanes, they came upon a litter passing in the other direction.

"Way there!" yelled their escort. "Way, ye sons of dogs, for the great Basha, the Bashador of the English!"

And the bearers of the litter squeezed up against the dirty wall to let them pass. As they went by, the Ambassador and the doctor noted that the litter was empty. That bore out the Frenchman's story; and they pressed on.

Arrived at the doctor's house, an impressive and horrid spectacle met their gaze. In the square courtyard the little fountain still leaped and splashed, the Moorish lanterns still burnt dimly between the arches, and the dead Captain—the doctor's brother—still lay where he had fallen. But a little way off on the tessellated floor Mohammed was outstretched, while Ali, with moans and murmurs, and cries of affection, knelt over his brother, now feeling at his heart, and now stroking and kissing his hand. And at the same time Molly, the widow of the dead Captain, stood aloof, as white and as rigid as the stucco pillar against which she leaned. The doctor went and knelt over Mohammed also, while Ali looked at him as if he scarcely knew him.



After a careful examination the doctor turned to Ali.

"My dear cousin," said he, in a voice that fought with emotion, "come away. Mohammed will never speak to you again. He is dead."

Ali gazed at him as if he did not comprehend.

"Poor Mohammed is dead," repeated the doctor. "Come and let me attend to yourself: I am sure you must have been bitten."

"Why should I care for myself," cried Ali, "when Mohammed is dead? Did I not live in Mohammed?" Then his grief broke forth, in his own musical Moorish speech. "Ai, ai," he moaned. "Lovely wert thou in thy life, oh, my brother, and dearer to me than women! They have killed thee in thy beautiful youth! My heart is very sore for thee, oh, my brother Hamed! Thou wert sweet and wonderful to me! We were one, and now we are divided! I am left alone! Ai, ai!" After that gentle flow of grief, he suddenly rose to his feet, and his own sheet-like garment almost fell from him as he clasped his arms above his head. "Cursed be they who sought thy innocent life! May Allah spoil their lives and break their hearts! May there be none to pity when trouble and horror come upon them, and may their children die upon the dunghill, avoided



even by the dogs! And cursed, beyond all cursing, be he who betrayed thee to thine enemies!"

The flesh of the doctor and of the Ambassador crept to hear these terrific words. The doctor was just reaching out his hand to pacify Ali, when the young Moor put him aside and pointed at Molly, whose presence he seemed to have just noted.

"Ha!" he cried. "Lo! The white witch who would not let me go to my brother Hamed's help!"

He sprang towards her with hands outstretched, as if he would seize and tear her. Molly fled screaming in terror, while the doctor and the Ambassador threw themselves upon Ali to restrain him. He collapsed in their hands, trembling and foaming. The poison of the serpents' bites was telling upon his blood and his brain.

"This is a bad business, doctor," said the Ambassador, as they laid the poor young Moor upon the pavement.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE BOY THAT KNOCKED AT THE GATE.

THE bad business took some time to mend; and the doctor had his hands and mind so much occupied that he found no opportunity to sit down and grieve for the deaths of his brother, the soldier, and his cousin, the young Moorish reformer. Ali lay a long while in a raging fever; and it is certain he would have died, in spite of his fine constitution, had he not been assiduously attended by the doctor, and nursed by Molly, who unexpectedly showed herself a miracle of devotion.

But both the doctor and his sister-in-law were in haste to get Ali well, and to carry him and themselves out of that cruel and deadly city of Fez; for the Sultan and his counsellors were in a dangerous mood, which was only kept in check by the resolution and adroitness of Sir Edward, the English Ambassador. The Sultan first desired to go back



upon his promise to give the doctor the lives of Mohammed and Ali on condition of taking them out of the country. He declared he did not remember giving his promise, nor his signet ring as a token of their pardon: nothing was said about the strange release of the young Moors by someone else, and, since the old Chamberlain and the young Frenchman had held their tongues about it, the Ambassador and the doctor did so also. But the Ambassador protested, and finally threatened to raise the whole question of the death of Captain Neale, which might cause the English Government to send an army and a fleet; and then the Sultan and his Ministers humbled themselves, and said they meant no harm; for was not England their very best friend, and were they not the obedient servants and slaves of England?

When that matter was settled, there arose a new trouble. The Ambassador pointed out to the Sultan and his counsellors that, since they had killed Captain Neale, the smallest amend they could make was to compensate his widow for her loss; and he suggested twenty-five thousand dollars as the smallest sum that could reasonably be offered. The Sultan and his advisers raised their eyes and their hands in amazement.



"But, O Bashador," said they, "the Sidi Captain's death was by mistake, by inadvertence. We are very sorry that the Captain is dead."

"But your sorrow," said the Ambassador, in effect, "will not make the Captain alive again."

Then other modes of compensation were suggested. The Sultan even offered to add Molly to the list of his own wives rather than part with money. But the Ambassador pointed out that that was an honor an English lady could not be expected to appreciate, and he insisted on the dollars. It was not, however, until he had again threatened to send for ships from Gibraltar to enforce his demand that the Sultan agreed to pay the stipulated sum.

But before these things were finally arranged several weeks had passed, and Ali was well on the way to recovery. His body was growing strong, but his spirit seemed dead. He would sit silent and brooding by the hour, his eyes vaguely following Molly's movements if he were in the house, or gazing, if he were on the roof at eventide, away over the hills to that home among the northern mountains which was associated with his memories of Mohammed. The doctor was distressed and anxious. One evening, when he sat with Ali on



the roof, he tried to rouse him from his torpor. He was surprised at the result.

"Come, Cousin Ali," said he, coaxingly, in the Moorish speech, "wake up, or you will never be of any use."

"I am wide awake, cousin doctor," said Ali.

"But I mean, Ali," continued the doctor, "that you should wake up your spirit. Pull its loose strings together and tie them up. Brace yourself to be of good courage and hope. Remember Mohammed, and the work that he would like you to finish for him."

Then a sudden change came upon Ali. He flared up like a fire that seems out, and has oil poured upon it. With burning eyes and low, but intense and vibrating voice, he spoke, leaning towards the doctor.

"Cousin mine, you do not understand. Is it possible for me, do you think, ever to forget my Mohammed? I do not forget; but I nurse the fire of his life within me. What in Allah's good time I may do to finish all that Mohammed desired to do I cannot tell; but my first duty is to take complete vengeance for the destruction of my Mohammed—vengeance complete, utter, and entire, wanting nothing. He who calls himself the Com-



mander of the Faithful, the son of a slave of Tafi let, may wait. He is a poor, flabby toad, who is made to hop this way and that by the hands of his ministers. He may wait, but his day will come. Next is he, the Sid' El Helba, who compassed the arrest of my brother and the punishment. His day also will come. But chiefly now," he went on, laying a convulsive grip on his cousin's arm, and letting his voice go in thrilling tones, "my thought and desire are bent to discover that unknown person who betrayed our presence here in this house of yours, cousin doctor. When I have found out who that person is—and I shall find out—then," he cried, raising his hands over his head, and his eyes to Heaven, "may Allah fill my heart with hatred and my mind with craft to work a fitting vengeance on that person now unknown!"

At these words the doctor shivered. For a second or two he could say nothing. Then, looking around at the brazen sunset, at the distant lurid hills, at the nearer palms and fig trees, and, last of all, at the parapet bounding the roof on which they sat, he shuddered and said:

"Let us get away from this horrible place—away to England. Your thoughts and feelings, Cousin Ali, will grow more wholesome and gentle there.



You have read something of our Christian Bible, Ali. There is in that a great saying: *'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord!'* "

Ali made no reply, but gazed steadily at the doctor.

"I, even I, would like," said the doctor, "to find out who the traitor was. But—come down, Ali, from this horrid roof. The evening chill is rising from the rotting ground."

After that remarkable piece of talk with Ali, the doctor's loathing of the place and all around it grew almost to fever heat. He longed to be away, and he sickened for England. He pushed forward his preparations and the ending of his engagement with the Sultan, and in a few days all was ready for departure.

On a certain evening all was noise and bustle in the doctor's courtyard and garden, for the dawn of next day was fixed for the northward journey, and the doctor knew the Moors too well to leave them and their mules and donkeys free in the city after he had engaged them. If he had left them to themselves, he would probably not have found them again for a week. All, then, was bustle, which the doctor was trying to regulate, and noise, which he was striving to subdue, when a knocking came at the outer gate. No more arrivals were expected for



the journey, and it was late for a visitor, so the doctor himself went and stood by while his big negro doorkeeper opened the gate. He was amazed when the gate was opened to see standing before him, with the torchlight flickering on his face, a very handsome, smooth-skinned boy in the usual dress of a well-to-do Moorish youth—a short Zouave jacket and a pair of very baggy trousers gathered at the ankle—but distinguished by a green turban. The boy was silent and abashed on seeing the doctor.

“Well, my son,” said the doctor, in the Moorish speech, “what is your errand and whom do you seek?”

“Sidi Doctor,” the youth stammered, “I—I am a poor boy. And, Sidi Doctor——”

“You don’t look like a poor boy,” said the doctor.

Then the lad, with more confidence, protested: “Sidi Doctor, I tell the truth. I am. I wear the green turban because I am the son of a Shereef, a descendant of the Prophet, but I am poor and lonely. My father is dead, and my mother has gone into the house of another man—a pig, a beast, a son of Satan—and I have no protector but Allah. I wish to travel, sidi, to find my uncle in Tangier.”

“Ah, my son,” said the doctor, “I see. You want



to travel with me?" and he began to shake his head.

"Oh, good Sidi Doctor," cried the lad, seizing the doctor's hand and clinging to it, "do not send me away. I will serve you and the Sid' Ali most faithfully. I will work and sing all the day, and lie awake all the night."

"You would not be much good at that rate," smiled the doctor. "But you know the Sid' Ali, then? How know you him?"

"Do not all men know the Sid' Ali?" said the boy. "And I," he added, "know more than others. Did I not see the Sid' Ali brought in a litter from the Sultan's Palace to the Sidi Doctor's house?"

"What is your name?" asked the doctor.

"My name, sidi," answered the boy, looking hard at his own fingers, "is Hamed—Hamed is my name."

The doctor looked at the boy, considered that, if he knew as much as he said, he might know more, and said, having made up his mind:

"Enter, my son. If you travel with us of your own free will, no man can say you were taken away."

He was thinking of the rigorous rule among the Moors that no true-born believer should enter the service of a Christian.



He led the boy across the courtyard among the half-dozen poor and scoundrelly Moors who were squatting and squabbling among the baggage, and from whose fierce gaze the boy shrank and turned his head away.

"Come," said the doctor, taking the boy's hand kindly, "and you shall talk with Sid' Ali."

"No, Sidi Doctor," said the boy, halting dead, with something like terror on his face. "Not to-night, sidi—to-morrow, perhaps."

The doctor wondered at the boy's distress, but he did not press the point. He was determined, however, that Ali should see him at the earliest opportunity, for perhaps he might recognize him.

When the boy slept that night on a mat in a little room off the doctor's own, Ali was led in to have a peep at him.

"Have you ever seen him before?" whispered the doctor.

Ali gazed, and finally shook his head. But their movements, hushed though they were, and the lamp light, shaded though it was, woke the boy. He looked at them, and instantly put up his hands to hide his face.

"Oh, Sidi Doctor, you should not!" he cried.

The doctor and Ali came away, somewhat put out and wondering a great deal.



"He's a mysterious kid," said the doctor to himself.

The next day some light was thrown on the mystery. The party of three travellers—the doctor, Ali and Molly—had managed to get off betimes, a little after sunrise, accompanied by the mysterious boy Hamed, by mules and mule drivers, and protected by the Government escort of two mounted soldiers. They rode slowly away over the hills to the northwest of Fez, through a country that was beginning to be dried up with the drought of summer, although it was but the month of May, when in England the "sweet o' the year" has barely come in. Yet, in spite of the heat and the drought, in spite of the memory of the horrors recently enacted in the hoary, filthy old city they had left behind, the doctor found it a lovely land. The air was crisp and dry like champagne, and all about them were flowering plants, red oleanders and what not, in and out among which flew and warbled real canaries, such canaries as are only to be seen in careful captivity in England. They rested during the mid-day heat, and ate a meal under a spreading cork oak, near a clear little brook of water. And thus refreshed, they rode on again, the two soldiers of the escort, simple as children (although they had in their hearts the cruelty of



devils), singing from sheer animal joy and want of thought, spurring their horses now and then into furious gallops, flinging their guns into the air and catching them again, or firing them off point-blank at some partridge or rabbit that might scurry from their path.

The doctor, as leader of the party, had turned aside a little from the direct route to Tangier, in order to visit the Roman ruins on a hill, which are said to be the remains of the city of Volubilis, and late in the afternoon the party pitched their tents at the bottom of the slope. While a fire was being lighted to cook by, the doctor and Molly strolled up the hill to look at the ruined stone arches and walls of the ancient Roman city. Ali would not go with them because, he said, the place was haunted by evil spirits.

They were at the top of the hill, and the doctor was trying to make out an inscription in big Roman capitals, when Molly suddenly cried out. She stood gazing away to the south, and shading her eyes from the brilliance of the sinking sun in the west.

"Who are they?" she asked. "They look like soldiers—horsemen. And they must be galloping. What for?"

The doctor looked to the south also, and saw,



sweeping on in a yellow haze of dust, a body of horsemen to the number of thirty or forty. They were plainly armed with spears, for over their heads there were glancing tips and shafts of light. They were about a mile off when first observed, and the doctor watched them as they swept nearer and ever more near. It did not at first occur to him that they might be seeking his party; but as the smoke of the newly made fire curled up into the air, there came from the party of horsemen a loud halloo, as they turned aside a little, and rode like a torrent for the small encampment.

“Good Heavens!” cried the doctor. “They’re after us! Come, Molly!”

He pelted down the slope, leaping fallen blocks of stone as he went, and followed by Molly more carefully. He reached his tents only a second or two before the horsemen.

“Look out! Look out!” he called, in the Moorish speech. “To arms!”

The two soldiers, who had been squatting to see the pot boil, jumped up and seized their long guns, the muleteers ran to their beasts and seized their cudgels, and Ali stood up, tall and ferocious, armed with an English breechloader. Seeing these preparations, the oncoming horsemen swept round them in



a circle, enclosing them, and drawing their horses up suddenly on their haunches with their big, cruel bits. One horseman alone flung himself from his steed and advanced to the doctor with angry head and hand shot out. He was the redoubtable Sid' El Helba.

“Christian dog! Son of a dog!” he yelled, as he approached. “Where is my daughter?”



## CHAPTER VII.

## ALULA.

"YOUR 'daughter, sidi?" exclaimed the doctor, in Moorish. "Am I the keeper of the daughter of the Sid' El Helba? Have my eyes even ever beheld the daughter of the sidi?"

"Sidi Doctor," cried the Sid' El Helba, "you lie like a Christian! Too well, I know, must all your senses by now be acquainted with my daughter!"

"This is madness and folly, sidi!" said the doctor, keeping his temper. "Lo!" he added, pointing to Molly, as she passed in through the circle of threatening horsemen. "She is the only woman of my company; and you know who she is."

"I know the daughter of the English, it is true," said the angry Moor, shooting a keen glance at Molly; "she has been of your household for many days."

"Here is all our company," continued Dr. Neale. "If you can find another woman among them, then



I shall be content to be convicted of lying and abduction, and to endure the consequences!"

"You have hidden her!" said the Moor, evidently a little shaken, but still obstinate in his belief.

"Where can she be hid?" demanded the doctor, sweeping his hand round to indicate the impossibility of concealment. "Among the baggage? Let the sidi have my baggage searched. Such a thing," he added, with a flash of temper, "I would not offer, or permit, to any comer; but in an afflicted father much is to be excused."

The Sid' El Helba did not accept the offer of search; for the size of the portmanteaux and packages lying around showed that they could not conceal the smallest of women. But he obstinately maintained:

"It is not possible, Sidi Doctor, that you do not know where my daughter is. Yesterday evening, after the hour of sunset prayer, she passed forth unknown to anyone save to an old female slave, and she has confessed that my daughter went forth to the house of the English doctor—to your house, sidi."

Then understanding came in a flash upon the doctor. "Ah, certainly, sidi," said he, "there came to my gate yester evening a boy who desired to travel



with me. He slept in my house, and he did travel with me. Hamed!" he called, looking around. "Where is Hamed?"

But Hamed did not answer. And, on looking through the company, no Hamed was to be found.

"He must have fled," said the doctor, "at the sight of your coming."

"The lord doctor," smiled Sid' El Helba, "is a man of wisdom. He is the master of magicians. He changes a girl into a boy, and he makes the boy disappear. Let the learned magician doctor reverse his magic, and my daughter will reappear as my daughter."

The doctor knew that it would be useless to protest that he had no magical powers; he would not be believed, for all skilful doctoring is accounted magic by the Moors. He had shown himself in Fez a skilful doctor; therefore, he was a magician; that was an argument unanswerable. So he had to take another line. He presented no argument at all, but accepted the inevitable situation.

"Your daughter, sidi," said he, "shall be produced, if she has not fled far away."

"She must appear, lord doctor," said El Helba, peremptorily, "if you do not desire to be carried back to Fez."



He strode back to his troop of horsemen, who had already lighted a fire and were preparing to bivouac for the night. And the doctor turned to take counsel with his sister-in-law and Ali. Ali had stood aloof in the interview with El Helba, although he had heard all that passed. Yet he appeared to take no interest in the necessity for finding Hamed.

"Is not that the man," said he, "who put my brother and me in the pit of serpents?"

The doctor assented that El Helba was the man.

"Then," added Ali, "he must surely die." And he would say no more.

As for Molly, she said too much. "We'll soon find her," said she. "The girl, after all, is too silly and timid a creature to wander far by herself. I always thought she was."

"Do you mean that you know her?" asked the doctor.

"Know her? Yes," answered Molly. "I have seen her at the house of the Governor, and in her father's house, too."

"And did you recognize her?" asked the doctor, more and more disturbed and astonished.

"Well, yes, I did," she answered. "And anybody but a male goose—a gander of a man—would have guessed that the shape and the walk of the creature



were not those of a boy. You have been in Morocco long enough, Dick, to have taken notice that Moorish boys turn their toes in, and Moorish girls their toes out." And she laughed lightly.

"This is no laughing matter," said the doctor, with a light frown. "When you recognized her, why didn't you tell me?"

"Well, for one or two reasons, Dick—for three, to be exact. It was rather too late when I recognized her—some time after we had started this morning, in fact; she begged me not to tell upon her, and I wanted to see what she would be up to."

"Well, you see now, I suppose," said he, "how serious a matter it is. If we don't find the girl, we must go back prisoners to Fez. And if once they get Ali into their cruel hands again, you can guess what may happen."

"I am very sorry," said Molly, without answering in the least to her description of herself. "But you needn't be so grumpy and alarmed. I'll find the girl."

And away she ran in haste (for darkness would soon descend like a curtain), and she coursed around among the scrub and the stones, calling in the Moorish speech: "Alula! Alula! If you do not come, your father will kill us!"



In answer to her appeal, Hamed (or Alula) appeared in a little while, scrambling through the bushes. And he (or she) and Molly came on together, talking earnestly.

"Lalla Alula," said Molly, "your father has come after us with horsemen, as you have seen, to take you back."

"I will not go back!" said Alula, with as much wilfulness as if she were English and not Moorish, and a civilized and educated young lady, instead of a semi-barbarous maiden, who had never learned to read or write. "You three," said she, "go to the land of the English. I wish to go also. I will go."

"If you truly wish to go to the land of the English, Lalla Alula," said Molly, "you may go in my company, but dressed as a maiden."

"Will the lady sister of the doctor truly take me there?" exclaimed Alula. "Then, am I, indeed, happy."

"But your father will need to be persuaded, Lalla Alula?"

"I will persuade him, lady," said Alula. "And, if I fail, then, lady, you will persuade him."

She spoke with a flattering smile that would have well become a young person used to the smooth ways of society. Molly agreed with her suggestion; and,



while Alula went boldly forward to face her father, Molly turned aside to inform her brother-in-law of the arrangement she had proposed. He said nothing but that, as she had the means—alluding to the considerable sum paid by the Sultan as compensation for her husband's death—so she had the right of pleasing herself.

Meanwhile the maiden Alula, in the dress of the boy Hamed, passed through the circle of her father's horsemen, and arrived before her father, where he squatted, cross-legged, telling his beads for the evening prayer, with his back to the gnarled trunk of an arar tree.

"Here I am, my father," said she, with a show of humility.

"Ah, thou rebellious daughter!" said he; and he blended his words to her with his parrot address to the Almighty: "O Giver of good to all! . . . Thou hast cost me a day's journey in the heat, all unused to hard riding as I am! . . . O Creator! Defender of the poor! . . . But the head of the pig-eating doctor shall answer for carrying thee off!"

"Finish thy prayer, and then listen to me, my father," said the Lalla Alula, with complete self-possession: she was evidently a spoiled child. He



finished his prayer, and she continued: "Be not like a foolish, ignorant man, my father. The lord doctor knew nothing of my leaving thy house, knew not even who I was. I said I was a poor boy who had no parents, and who wished to arrive at Tangier to find a rich uncle."

"Kah, kah!" laughed the doting father. "Thou sweet bundle of craft and lies, kiss thy foolish father, who knows not how to be angry with thee. Allah has seen fit to give me no son; but thou shouldst have been a boy!"

She kissed her father, and pulled his beard, which was straight and straggling like a goat's.

"Thou must contrive to spend the night here with me, but to-morrow at dawn we ride back to Fez."

"Nay, not so, my father," said she, caressing his hand and his cheek.

"What, rebellious one? Why nay?"

"I have a great scheme in my little head for thy greatness, my father. I wish to make thee Vizier, my father, and to give thee power to lead our lord the Sultan as a grown man leads a little child. For that end it is necessary that I go to the land of the English."

"What, thou obstinate and rebellious daughter! Dost thou still cherish thy madness and perversity?"



The land of the English is very far. How canst thou ever reach it? It is beyond the heaving sea. Hast thou no fear that the sea will swallow thee up?"

"I am thy daughter and I have no fear, my father. Moreover, I will go holding the hand of the lady sister of the doctor, and the ships of the English are great and strong. Have I not seen them?"

Then her father wept, saying: "Ai, ai! Have I not cherished thee as a dove in my bosom, and thou wouldst lightly leave me and fly away? But thou shalt not. I will bind thee and carry thee back, and feed thee on the black bread of affliction and the stale water of affliction to tame thy obstinate mind."

"Listen to me, my father," said she, still caressing him. "Thou hast not heard my plan. It is part of my plan that thou shouldst go to the land of the English also."

"Now, Allah forbid!" he exclaimed.

"Nay, my father, pray rather that Allah may grant it, for I have had a dream that I should travel to the land of the English first, and that thou wouldst follow and thereafter be the greatest of all men. And now I understand how. Listen to me,



my father. Thou art truly of the family of the Shereefs of Tetuan, although a distant and humble member. Is that not so?"

"I am indeed and of a truth," said he, proudly.

"Mohammed, the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan is dead. He was a rebel. His brother Ali is now Grand Shereef and Prince in his stead, is he not?"

"He is. May the curse of Allah light upon him!"

"It will, my father. He also is a rebel, and when he reaches the land of the English he will rebel more and more. I will travel in his company, and I will speak kindly to him, and tempt him more and more to rebellion till he is deep in treason to the neck. Then, in the meanwhile, thou wilt also travel to the land of the English."

"But, wherefore, oh foolish seer of visions and teller of tales, should I travel to the land of the English?" demanded her father, profoundly interested.

"I have considered it all," said his daughter. "Is there not a mission talked of to finish the business which brought Sir Edward to Fez?"

"But that is the business of Sid' Moussa."

"It must be thine, my father. Thou, and not



Sid' Moussa, must travel to the land of the English on that mission. And when thou dost come and hast stayed a while, thou shalt go to the Sultana of the English and demand that Ali, Prince of Tetuan, be arrested and handed over to thee by her soldiers as a rebel and traitor against our lord the Sultan. I will find and prepare thee the proofs."

"Thou art a jewel of a daughter," exclaimed her father. "Better than a score of sons!"

"Then shall we bring back Ali in bonds," she continued, "and thou shalt become in his place Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan and Vizier of our lord the Sultan."

The Sid' El Helba started to his feet in his excitement. He called one of his black horsemen.

"Go," said he, "to the Sidi Doctor and say that I seek a word with the Sidi Doctor's sister." The man departed, and then to his daughter El Helba said: "Withdraw for a little while out of sight and out of hearing."

In a few minutes Molly came and found El Helba seated on some gay saddle-cloths in the flickering light of the fire. He motioned her to a similar seat near him. He smiled and rubbed his hands, while he considered her closely.

"Thou hast something to say to me, sidi?" she said, sweetly.



“In a little while,” said he, slowly, “I shall meet thee in the land of the English. Does the prospect please thee?”

Molly went pale, deathly pale, and put her hand up to her cheek. She moved her lips and moistened them with her tongue, but for some moments she said no word.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## A SOCIETY SORCERESS.

It was in the month of July, and the London season was in the fullest swing; in fact, it had been in full swing so long that it was growing tired and inclined to lassitude and headache. Perhaps the only women in London who were what is vulgarly called "in the swim," and who still floated on gaily and with obvious enjoyment, were Molly Neale and the Moorish maiden Alula. Molly was known among men as "the merry widow." She persistently wore mourning, for she knew that black in all its fashionable shapes and modifications became her, and she was aware, also, that it advertised her. She saw, she felt, that when she appeared in any gathering people asked: "Who is the little woman"—or, for preference—"the pretty little woman, in black?" And then she was convinced that her pa-



thetic story was told. How her husband was shot—before her very eyes!—in a Moorish Palace when he was trying to save from capture and imprisonment the Prince of Tetuan. That was the new Prince over there, the gentleman with the Italian look, the large melancholy, languorous eyes, and the silky, dark-red beard. An odd combination of color, was it not?

It made him look very remarkable and noble, and it was accounted for by his having had an English, or, rather, an Irish mother.

Thus Molly knew she was talked about, and her name constantly associated with that of Ali, the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan. She had been resolved upon making an impression on society, and she was delighted with her success; for she had been taken up, not only by those who court notorieties, but also by those soft-hearted (but too frequently wrong-headed) people who are always in sympathy with oppressed causes so long as they are not British.

For these latter folk Molly represented her slaughtered husband, who had died in defence of an oppressed cause (so the story went); while Ali represented that cause itself, of which his brother had been the martyr. The Moorish girl, Alula,



provoked an interest of another kind—a wondering fascination. Was she not the daughter of one of those wicked, cruel, and tyrannical Bashas from whom the oppressed people of Morocco sighed and moaned for relief? People seemed astonished to find her so beautiful, so gay, so childlike, and altogether so charming.

“Looks quite ladylike and refined, does she not, in her English clothes? I wonder what she wears at home?” That was the kind of thing that was said.

On a certain afternoon a sympathetic and philanthropic Countess gave a garden party. She had been in frequent correspondence with Prince Ali of Tetuan and his confidential adviser and cousin, Dr. Neale, and she intended her party to be the inauguration of a new society which she (and other amiable philanthropists in council with her) proposed to call “The Friends of Moorish Freedom.” But most of the guests—Molly Neale among them—found that rather an excuse than a reason for attending the Countess’s garden party. Three causes, truly, combined to bring a crowd: the fineness of the weather, the loveliness of the grounds, and the necessity of being seen at so fashionable a function. But the Countess had a good deal of



the wisdom of her world. She knew that her guests would need amusement, as well as philanthropic instruction; and, therefore, in addition to her great event—which was declared to be the appearance of the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan to address the assemblage on the cause of Moorish Freedom—she provided what may be called, without disrespect or irreverence, “side-shows.” The chief of these attractions was a young lady who was credited with the gift of second sight, but whose ordinary accomplishment was palmistry. She was a relation of the Countess. She did not practice her art for hire, and therefore, her vaticinations were more sought after than those of professional prophets, who were thought to be too frequently both dear and lying.

Miss Cameron, palmist and seer, received the suitors of her skill in a large greenhouse where was an ancient grape-vine. A footman kept the door, and resolutely refused to let more than one party enter at a time. Molly and Alula encountered at the door the Prince of Tetuan and Dr. Neale.

“Oh, how do you do?” gushed Molly. “It’s ages since we met. Are you going in to the sorceress, Prince?” (She had never called Ali “Prince” in his own country.) “And you, too, Dick? I



thought you were too wise and solemn to be interested in having your fortune told!"

"Well, yes," said Dick Neale, "I fear it is small evidence of wisdom to be interested in the things you are interested in, Molly."

She tapped his knuckles with her fan. "Do let us go in together as one party. It will be such fun to hear each other's fortunes."

They passed in together, Molly leading with Ali, and the doctor following with Alula. But Alula seemed scarcely conscious of the doctor's neighborhood. Her dark eyes—wonderful orbs of light—were steadily fixed on him who passed in before her. They presented themselves to the sorceress, Miss Cameron, who was a handsome young lady with ruddy hair and ruddy complexion. She sat against the vine, and its swelling bunches of purple grapes seemed to hang towards the glow of her head.

"Ah, Prince," said she, with humble deprecation of her function, "I'm afraid I can't tell your fortune. It is too great for me."

Although Ali was fast progressing in his knowledge of conversational English, he did not quite understand what the lady said, and it was translated for him into Moorish by the doctor.



"Yes," said he then. "I wish it, please. But first the young lady of my country."

Alula blushed when the proposal was explained to her, laughed, and hid her face for an instant on Molly's shoulder. Then she sat down and submitted her hand to the sorceress, and Molly translated into Moorish as Miss Cameron spoke. There was, however, nothing remarkable in her fortune. The hand was young and plump, its lines few. There was but one point very notable, where the line of love crossed the line of life. So Alula was set aside to ponder. Molly resolutely abjured her right to follow next. She could not and would not go before the Prince; she must hear his great and delightful fortune first. So Ali sat down and solemnly submitted his hand—both his hands—to the sorceress. As Miss Cameron spoke the doctor translated, and Ali listened with profound attention.

"What an extraordinary hand!" exclaimed the lady, perusing the palm and bending the fingers of the left hand, and then doing the same with the right. "Here are deeply-marked double lines of life and double lines of love, and the lines of love run into the lines of life in the most resolute way."



"It is good," murmured Ali, when her words had been translated into his Moorish.

So she ran on in the usual way about the line of the head and the line of the heart, the mount of this and the mount of that; all to no particular purpose.

"Tell me of the future," said Ali.

She studied his hands very closely and in silence, and then she went on as in a reverie with her eyes bent on the palms.

"The future is closely dependent on the past. As the past has been troubled and stormy, so will the future be. In the past was a very, very great grief; it was not a love-grief and it was not a life-grief; it was a remarkable interlocking of the two. I cannot quite make out what it was."

"It was the death of my brother Mohammed," said Ali, simply.

"From that," continued the sorceress, "springs the great purpose of the future in which great personages are concerned, and men with swords and on horseback."

"Will the purpose succeed?" asked Ali, impatiently.

She pored more intently upon the palms, and with a finger-tip carefully traced this line and that.



"It will succeed," said she.

"Ha! Good!" said he.

"But only," she added, "through means which your friends will find for you."

"My friends of the English?" said he, with a smile.

"No," said she, viewing the palms with some perplexity, "it is foreign aid you will get. And," she added, looking in his face, "since you are half-English, English aid would not really be foreign. Besides," she continued, returning to the perusal of the palms, "you will only escape disaster and death by becoming a citizen of that country that will give you aid. And that country," said she, with a smile, "can't be England, for our Government is too cautious to make citizens when there is any risk in making them."

Ali looked thoughtful, but said nothing.

"All that," said Molly, "seems to me awfully uninteresting. You do not say anything, Miss Cameron, of his love affairs. Will he never marry?"

Ali turned to the doctor for a translation of Molly's words.

"No," said he, brusquely, when he had understood; "no love, no marriage."

He withdrew his hands from the palmist, and



Alula turned away her head with a look of unquenchable fire.

It was then Molly's turn to submit her hands to the sorceress, and she did so merrily. But her merriment soon ceased, for Miss Cameron's reading of her palms caused great sensation in the party. In her case, as in Ali's, the lines of life and of love were double; but they were unblended. The lines of life were well marked and strong, while the line of the head and the line of the heart were vague and weak. These, however, were but statements to laugh over.

"I always suspected your head, Molly," said the doctor, with a smile, "of being vague and weak; but that's news about your heart."

The sensation came after.

"Tell me," said Molly, "shall I have another husband?"

"Do you want another, Mrs. Neale?" asked Miss Cameron. She spoke with a smile, but her tone was envenomed.

"That is just as may be," laughed Molly.

"Well," said Miss Cameron, "the future must always closely depend on the past. Let me see," and she pored upon the palm of the left hand and then upon the right. She paused as if doubtful,



and looked hard in Molly's face. She looked at the hands again. "I really cannot tell you," she said at length, pushing the palms away. "If I had you alone I might, but I really cannot now."

"Is it too terrible?" asked Molly, with a laugh; but she had changed color to a livid, damp white—a change which not even her careful cosmetics could hide. Miss Cameron said no more, but continued to look at her. "Is it murder, or bigamy, or what?" Molly demanded. But she did not ask whether the astonishment was concerning the future or the past.

"I will tell you alone some time," said Miss Cameron.

"Well," said Molly, "will you come and see me alone to-morrow, in the afternoon?"

"I will," said Miss Cameron.

"It is too ridiculous, isn't it?" said Molly, flouncing up and appealing to her companions. The doctor looked troubled, while, as for Ali and Alula, they looked merely puzzled, because they did not understand, although they guessed that something untoward had been said. Molly herself looked more than troubled. She looked scared, and she bit her lip now and again as they walked out of the greenhouse.



When they were out Molly encountered another surprise. A well-dressed gentleman, with large pointed moustaches, saluted her, hat in hand.

"My dear Mrs. Neale," said he, "how happy I am to meet you again!"

He spoke with a strong French accent. Molly glanced at her brother-in-law as if she would ask: "Who is this gentleman? I don't remember."

"It is Captain De Courcel, Molly," said Dick. "You must have met him in Fez."

"To be sure," gurgled Molly. "I did not recognize him in these clothes. I hope you are very well, Monsieur De Courcel."

"I thank you," said the polite Frenchman. "And you? There is no need to inquire. You look charming. If I may come to see you, and," he added, with an odd accent, "to talk of our meetings in Fez."

"I am at home," said Molly, "every Wednesday afternoon."

They parted. Molly smiled, but the moment after she looked not only troubled, but perplexed, and her bosom heaved.

Her trouble and perplexity would have been greater still if she had been privileged to follow De Courcel into the greenhouse.



“Well,” said Miss Cameron, giving him her hand with a charming smile, “I have said what you suggested.”

“To both?” he asked.

“To both,” said she.

“Good,” said he, clasping her hand again. “Very good.”



## CHAPTER IX.

## “THE FRIENDS OF MOORISH FREEDOM.”

BUT the great event of the Countess's garden party was, as I have said, the meeting for the inauguration of the Society of “The Friends of Moorish Freedom.” At a certain moment the Countess and her advisers found the Prince of Tetuan and Dr. Neale, surrounded them, and conveyed them to a table set with a water-bottle and glass at the top of the terrace steps. They all took their places solemnly in chairs about three sides of the table. Then a man with a long beard, who was the publisher of several books about Morocco, rose and proposed that a certain noble lord should be the chairman; and another man, who had written one of the books about Morocco which the publisher had published, rose and seconded the proposal. The proposal was received with applause by the waiting assembly at the bottom of the steps. Thereupon the noble lord—who had found fortune and a peerage in whisky—took the chair, uttered a



few halting sentences about the oppressed condition of the people of Morocco, and then begged to introduce to them his Highness Ali, Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan, and a lineal descendant of the Prophet Mohammed.

"I have great pleasure," added the noble lord, with haste and relief, "in requesting the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan to address you."

There was a flutter of interest in the crowd, especially among the ladies. Dr. Neale and Ali (who knew not at all what was expected of him) held a whispered consultation; and then Ali rose, and was greeted with a storm of applause, which somewhat puzzled and disconcerted him.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said he (for he had not yet been educated to the civilized pitch of putting ladies first), "I have not your English quick on the tongue to say things well. Soon I will. My friend, my cousin, the learned Dr. Neale, he will say for me."

These little, modest, and simple sentences pleased his audience more than would have a serious and philanthropic speech. They applauded vigorously and declared it was "very pretty."

"It is very clever, very wise," said De Courcel, shutting up a notebook which he had surreptitious-



ly made ready. He stood on the skirt of the throng in the company of Miss Cameron, the sorceress.

"Were you going to take notes," she asked, "if he made a speech?"

"I was," he answered.

"Why?" she asked. He glanced at her with a smile. "Tell *me*," she murmured.

"Because," said he, "we others, of France, take a very great interest in Ali of Tetuan—but a very great interest indeed! Know you," he added, in a burst of confidence, "that the Grand Shereef of Tetuan has more of influence, more of worship, in the country of Moroc than his Highness the Sultan himself? Much more."

"Has he, indeed?" exclaimed Miss Cameron, glancing at Ali with new interest.

"If it pleased him to make an insurrection and to raise the green banner of the Prophet," continued De Courcel, "he would have more followers, many more, than the Sultan himself. But I think the young man does not know that."

"Ah, I see," said Miss Cameron. "And you would like to find out if he knows it?" The Frenchman smiled. "And to teach him if he does not know?" The Frenchman smiled again. "And to lead him on to rebellion when he does know?"



A third time the Frenchman smiled. She looked at him steadily and shook her head.

"Why not?" said he. "Rebellion is my forte, my *métier*."

"Ah, Captain De Courcel," said Miss Cameron, in a very low voice, and with a soft, sad sigh, "will you never leave off your dangerous, wicked ways and settle down?"

"I am too poor," said he, with an easy shrug. "'Sh! The learned Dr. Neale is speaking."

She was silent. But she looked thoughtful, and she lightly tapped her fingers with her fan.

There is no need for me to report exactly and *verbatim* what Dr. Neale said. It was remarkable that, as if he had overheard De Courcel's words, he repeated to the whole company, but more fully, pretty much the same kind of statements regarding the position in Morocco of the Grand Shereef of Tetuan, with this difference: He said nothing about warlike rebellion; on the contrary, he declared that the reforms and the changes which Ali, and his brother Mohammed before him, wished to produce were peaceful.

"The influence," said he, "of the family of the Grand Shereef has been wide; but it has been religious rather than political, in a country where pol-



itics mean war, assassination, plunder, and massacre. The wretched people of Morocco," he continued, "have had enough, and more than enough, of that variety of politics. It is a peaceful, kindly movement that my cousin wishes to promote. His cause is merely the elementary cause of good laws, and equal justice for all men. It is the cause of civilization without warfare. The Prince of Tetuan desires to be a Prince of peace."

With that lead other speakers followed in the same strain, and at last the Society of "The Friends of Moorish Freedom" was declared founded, and subscriptions were invited.

"Ah, doctor!" exclaimed De Courcel, when they met a little later. "You English! You English!"

"Well," said the doctor, smiling, "what do you find is the matter with us English now?"

"It is always 'Peace! Peace!' when"—he shrugged his shoulders—"you do not mean that at all."

"My dear sir," said the doctor, "you do not understand. We always desire peace; but if our peaceful disposition is taken advantage of by people who wish to make a row, we knock them on the head—for the sake of peace."

"Ah, yes," said the Frenchman, "as your people



say, England desires to be the policeman of the world—the great policeman with a great stick.”

“And France,” said the doctor, “is the gendarme of the world—the little gendarme with the little sword—who makes more trouble than he can put down.”

The Frenchman accepted the retort with a bow and a shrug. “*Bien*,” said he. “Well—very well. *Apropos*, I have just conducted to the great policeman at the gate your charming sister Madame Neale. Oh, it was nothing. She was fatigued——”

“Very unusual for her to be fatigued,” interrupted the doctor.

“Yes,” assented De Courcel. “She wished to go home. She refused to let me find her carriage; she said the policeman would do that. She has her own carriage—yes?” asked De Courcel.

“I believe,” said the doctor, somewhat grumpily, “she has set up something of the kind, hired probably. I don’t see,” he added, half to himself, “how she can afford anything else.”

“So,” said the Frenchman, “she is not rich?”

“It would be news to me if I were told she is,” said the doctor, and turned away.

“Do you return to town now?” asked De Courcel. “Will you take a seat in my victoria?”



"Thanks, no," said Dr. Neale. "I must find my cousin and return with him."

"*Apropos*," said the Frenchman, returning and laying an emphatic finger on the doctor's sleeve, "have you ever guessed who delivered Ali and his brother from the pit of serpents? Has Ali ever guessed?"

"I haven't, and I don't think he has," said the doctor. "I only remember something you said at the time about an houri from Paradise."

"Well," said De Courcel, "that houri was the girl Alula, the daughter of El Helba. That is true. I saw her with these, my own eyes."

"Really? Well, I had not guessed that."

And so they parted. As the doctor moved here and there to find his cousin Ali, he looked troubled.

"That French fellow always disturbs me," he grumbled to himself. "Now why did he want to inquire about Molly's means? And why, at this particular moment, did he tell me about Alula? I must tell that to Ali, I suppose. He will take a greater interest in the girl. That may be a good thing for him and for her, too. She's a very nice girl. . . . A very handsome girl. . . . Might allay enmities . . . and reconcile enemies. . . . But I wonder what is in his scheming, unscrupulous head about Molly?"



## CHAPTER X.

## THE FRENCHMAN'S TRIUMPH.

MRS. NEALE had established herself in a handsome flat in Chelsea Mansions, Victoria-street. Her drawing-room was unusually large for a flat; and on her Wednesday afternoons she was quite proud of it, and the number of well-dressed and more or less polite and distinguished people it contained. But on her last Wednesday of the season she seemed less pleased and proud than had been her wont; and that was not because her drawing-room was deserted, for she was a society favorite, and for her last day she had the presence of a large and brilliant company.

But Molly was not happy. She had an accumulation of worries to weigh upon and depress her. First and most insistent was this: Miss Cameron, the palmist and seer, had not fulfilled her promise to come in private and explain her hints of things



terrible read in Molly's pink palms. Three weeks had passed, and now Molly had been invited for August to the Countess's place in Scotland, where, doubtless, Miss Cameron would appear also. And Molly was afraid of Miss Cameron. Secondly, Molly had an increasing suspicion that Alula was in love—deeply, passionately in love—with Ali. Since Ali had learned who had released his brother and himself from the pit of serpents, he had come frequently to Molly's flat to see her and Alula. That was perfectly right and proper. But that Alula—a mere child, a semi-savage, and Molly's *protégée*—should look on Ali with eyes of love was utterly ridiculous. As a matter of fact, Alula was no child, although only sixteen. Being a Moor, she was quite a woman; and Molly knew that, while she affected to believe her an infant. Besides, Molly had other matrimonial views for the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan, who, she had been surprised to learn, was a personage of greater wealth and influence than the Sultan of Morocco himself. Thirdly, her brother-in-law, Dr. Dick, had sent her word that he desired a serious, solitary interview with her before she departed for Scotland, and he was coming that afternoon. Fourthly and lastly, Captain De Courcel also desired an interview with



her that evening, and he was coming to dinner. And she was troubled with doubts of Captain De Courcel.

Dr. Dick arrived just as Molly was saying "good-bye" to the last of her afternoon guests.

"Will you have a cup of tea, Dick?" she asked.

"No, thank you," he answered.

"Anything else?" said she.

"Presently, perhaps," said he; "but not yet." And he glanced at the dazzlingly handsome person of Alula extended on a couch in a languorous reverie.

"Well," said Molly, settling herself in a lounge-chair that became her figure and her dress, "you want to talk seriously, don't you?" She spoke with loud distinctness.

"Yes," said Alula, in her pretty English, in which she was becoming fluent, "I know. I will go away," and she rose from her couch and withdrew.

The doctor watched her go with interest.

"You shouldn't keep her in short frocks, Molly," he murmured. "She is quite a woman."

"Is she?" said Molly, carelessly.

"You don't think enough of that girl, Molly," said he.

"And," she retorted, with energy, "it seems to me, Dick, that you think too much."



"You dress her so badly," said the doctor, "and yourself so well."

"I can't afford to dress her any better," said Molly, "if I am to have a rag for my own poor back."

And she looked down at the delicate confection of lace and silk which draped her pretty, plump person, and which she called a tea-gown.

"I suppose," said he, "you hope to get the cost of her out of her doting papa, the Sid' El Helba? And I don't imagine he'll be mean."

It was said at a venture; but the effect was somewhat remarkable. Molly shot a sharp glance at her brother-in-law; she flushed, and then she paled.

"You *do* hope to get the money from him?" he said.

"And if I do, what then?" she demanded. "Is it wrong to be reimbursed a little for all I am out of pocket? I am poor enough, goodness knows, Dick."

"That brings us, Molly, to the very thing I wanted to talk about."

"Oh, goodness gracious! I thought that was it, Dick. Go on."

'Well, my dear, I'm your trustee—I wish I were



not, but I am—and I must consider how you are going to keep all this up.”

“All what up?”

“This expensive flat,” said he, sweeping his hand around, “and things like that what’s-his-name that you have on.”

“Oh,” said she, “you would like me to live in a garret, I suppose, or in a cellar, and wear all day long a rusty black frock. Well,” she continued, “I am not going to do that for anyone.”

“My dear Molly,” he argued, feebly, “I don’t want you to do that.”

“No,” said she, “it would be no use asking me, because I won’t! . . . I won’t lead the mouldy life of a mouldy widow, dining on bread and dripping one day, and on dripping and bread the next for a change!”

“I would like you,” said the doctor, insisting on being heard—for Molly had a way of seeking to beat down opposition with an unceasing stream of whimsical, irresponsible, naïve protest, which seemed childlike, but which (I believe) was carefully calculated—“I would like you,” he insisted, “to have the best time possible, but there turns up the eternal question of ‘How?’ What means have you got to get a good time?”



"I must make a rich marriage," said she, with her eye now attentively turned on him. "And I would—if you didn't try to balk me."

It needed reflection for a second or two before the doctor understood.

"You don't mean to say, Molly," he exclaimed, "that you are thinking of Ali?"

"Why not? Your aunt married a Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan; why shouldn't I?"

"I have always understood, Molly," said the doctor, seriously and sympathetically, "that she bitterly repented it. She led a most miserable existence. I am sure it must be always a mistake for a civilized woman to marry a barbarian."

"After all," said she, "Ali is only half a barbarian."

"But his views of women are barbarous, that I can tell you," declared the doctor.

"How interesting," said she. "The civilized view is silly and dull; I can quite imagine the barbarous view might be an attractive, a delightful change."

"Well, Molly," said he, with a sigh, "I know you well enough to be sure that, if you have set your mind on that, you won't let it alone. If you want a hot cinder out of the fire you don't mind burning your fingers. But I don't think you'll succeed. I think Ali is really taken up with Alula."



"That's merely gratitude," said Molly, shrewdly. "People don't marry out of gratitude."

They continued to talk, but of things which do not concern this story. We will, therefore, come to the time when Dick Neale said adieu to Molly at the door of her flat. She heard the deep notes of Big Ben boom harmoniously through the hot, hazy air. She counted them. Seven! The doctor had lingered late, and Captain De Courcel should have arrived; he had promised to come early. In proceeding to her room to dress for dinner she passed what she called her morning-room. She was amazed to hear impassioned voices—the voices of Alula and Captain De Courcel. She paused and listened without scruple. They spoke in Moghrebbin, or Moorish, which Molly understood and could use pretty well now.

"Yes," said Alula, "it is I that say it! By what right dost thou, Kaid of a Hundred" (meaning a person of pretty low rank), "meddle with the affairs of Ali of Tetuan?"

"But, Lalla Alula," said the Frenchman, with slow carelessness, "thou art but a maiden, and a young one. What knowest thou of matters of State?"

"My father," said Alula, with an angry stamp



of her little foot, "when I set out to come to the land of the English, gave me Ali of Tetuan to observe, and to note, so that I might tell him all when he came."

"Did he indeed and of a truth?" said the Frenchman, with sarcastic voice. "It is, then, a strange thing that I, even I, the poor Kaid of a Hundred, am here on the same errand, sent by thy worthy and honored father, the Sid' El Helba. It may be that thy father repented him when thou wert gone. He may have thought that he had done foolishly in bidding a young and beautiful maiden keep watch and make report on a handsome young man; although he be his enemy and the Sultan's."

"Peace, Sir Captain!" said Alula, again stamping in anger. "I am not young and beautiful for thee!"

"Nay, lovely Lalla, but it is likely thou art for Ali of Tetuan."

"If that thought was in my father's head it is thou, poisonous toad of a Frenchman, that must have put it there!"

"Now that I recall it," said De Courcel, "I did murmur a question in the ear of the fond and foolish father of the Lalla. And this was the question: 'Hath Allah compounded young maidens



so that they can be the enemies of handsome young men, even if the young men be the enemies of the maidens' fathers?' That was my question, and it is possible that the fond father of the Lalla answered in his heart and said, 'No.' "

"Thou art a beast, a traitor! Thou art the head of a hyena!" said Alula. "Now will I tell my father when he comes how thou goest hither and thither on thine own business and not on his, how thou dost lead Ali of Tetuan to the house of the French Bashador. Ha, I have seen thee, and now thou art afraid! And I will ask my fond and foolish father to consider why Ali of Tetuan should be carried secretly to the house of the Bashador of France."

There was a pause before De Courcel replied. "Then, Lalla Alula, dost thou guess what I will do? I will reveal to the fond and doting father of the Lalla that his daughter, and no other, was the person who truly released Ali of Tetuan and his brother from the pit of serpents to which he had condemned them. What will the Sid' El Helba say to that?"

It was Alula's turn to be silent.

"I think," said De Courcel, presently, "it is time that we sought the presence of Madame Neale."



And Molly fled to her room. When she reappeared in the drawing-room dressed for dinner, she merely said in French: "I hope you have not been waiting long?"

To which De Courcel replied: "I arrived before your brother-in-law, the doctor, went away; but Alula took pity on me, and entertained me with talk."

During the dinner they spoke in French, of which Alula, of course, understood not a word. The Moorish maiden, therefore, when dinner was at an end, and they had returned to the drawing-room—she waited till then, for she had quickly picked up all the usages of public behavior—withdrew to the balcony to look out upon the street. Then the two prepared to have their private talk, for the presence of the third person was a constraint, even although they knew that the third person did not understand their words.

"Well," said she, smiling up in his face from her favorite lounge-chair; he was leaning against the corner of the mantel, with a thoughtful eye on the balcony.

"You are very lovely—very beautiful, to-night!" said he, turning fully towards her and taking a seat near her.



That speech from a man who was not an intimate neither shocked nor distressed her; she was too experienced. She only smiled and wondered what it was the preface to.

“You have not come here to-night to say that?”

“Truly I have—truly,” said he.

“Then,” said she, “pardon me, but you must have been unusually feeble-minded, Captain De Courcel, when you thought it worth while asking for an interview to tell me that. I expected to hear something new—something startling.”

“Ah, patience, dear madame,” said he, “that may come. You do not love to be told that you are beautiful?—lovely?”

She shrugged her pretty plump shoulder, which shone very white—whiter far and more dazzling than any ivory, because it was soft and warm with life—it shone white and creamy, as only healthy human flesh can shine, against the black of her exquisite dinner-dress.

“I suppose,” said she, “it is never disagreeable to any woman to be told she is good-looking.”

“But it is not precious to you that I say it?”

“Well,” she pouted, “as I have said, it is a disappointment; I thought you would have something to tell me of more interest and freshness.”



"I have," said he, promptly.

"And that is?"

"That I love you!—passionately!—with all my heart!"

"Really," said she, looking him coldly in the face, "that certainly is somewhat startling! I am sorry that I cannot rise to the occasion and reply that I also love you—passionately!—with all my heart."

"That is of no consequence, dear madame, I assure you," said the Frenchman. "When a man desires a woman, and loves her passionately, the woman always ends with loving him. So it will be with me and with you."

He seemed so confident that she began to take an interest in the matter.

"Give me your hand," said he. "I wish it. I pray you. If you please."

He put out his hand and took hers, and she looked at him and let him, a little afraid, and a little fascinated, and still a little curious concerning the sequel of this strange love-making.

"Dear madame," said he, "I desire this hand in marriage," and before she was aware he stooped and kissed it.

Brusquely she snatched her hand away.



"Now," said she, "I find it possible to be serious. You have had a foolish ambition, Captain De Courcel, and you have lost your head, but do, I beg you, understand that I cannot marry you. I do not say I dislike you," she continued, politely, but coldly, "for I think you are clever and handsome."

"*Merci, madame.*" The Captain permitted himself to be a trifle sarcastic.

"But," she continued, "I will say frankly that, sentiment—love—apart, I cannot afford to marry you. I am very poor. It is necessary, my friend, that I make a rich marriage."

"Ah, it is for a joke, to laugh at, that you say you are poor, dear madame. I am poor, it is true; but soon, very soon, I shall be rich. Yet, with you own income, dear madame, why speak you of poverty? England is generous, is she not, to the widows of her officers? And there is money, madame, you got from his Shereefian Majesty of Morocco; it makes a good capital sum."

"A paltry compensation for my husband's loss: one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs—five thousand pounds sterling."

"You forget, dear madame, it is truly ten thousand pounds sterling—two hundred and fifty thousand francs. I do not speak only of compensation for your



husband's death; I speak also of payment for the death of another.

Molly gazed at him truly fascinated, as a poor rabbit may gaze at a threatening snake. And the Frenchman gazed steadily back at her. She lost all color; she grew almost grey; and she seemed to shrink till it was pitiful to see her.

"What do you mean?" she asked, mechanically, in words that tripped over each other.

"Oh, dear madame, you have forgotten it," said he. "It is not an agreeable story. But it is truly nothing, and when we are married—eh?—we shall laugh over it."

"We shall never be married, never! You are a hateful beast! You have heard some lies about me. What lies? What is the lie? You shall tell me!"

"Does madame truly wish me to remind her?"

"Tell me!" said she, madly, still gazing as if fascinated. "Tell me the lie!"

(At that moment Alula came in from the balcony, and slipped out of the room unobserved by either.)

"This is the story, dear madame: The two brothers of Tetuan were believed to be in rebellion against the Sultan, and a precious price was put



upon the life of the elder, the active, brother. The price was five thousand pounds sterling—one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs. And one afternoon there rode through the dust and heat into the Imperial Palace—to the house of the Sid' El Helba—a lady to claim the price."

"The price of what—of what?" she panted, madly, like a fascinated creature being overcome. "You are deceived. Someone deceived you. I was there merely to make a call."

"Nay, dear madame," said he, with his eye still fixed on her. "For I was in the next room, and I prepared the paper to which madame set her hand."

She rose at him in a frenzy.

"You lie!" she said. "You lie! Wickedly lie!"

She heard steps. She spun around, she saw Ali and Alula before her. She gazed at them a moment, swayed and fell on the carpet.



## CHAPTER XI.

## “VOO MANTAY.”

MOLLY was not at all the kind of woman who is given to fainting; she had good health and tolerably good nerves as a result of her health, and she did not corset herself too tight. Why, then, did she lose herself at that moment and become as if she were dead? I think you will find the reason in this, that when she turned and beheld Ali with Alula, the sudden fear seized her that they must have heard the last wild part of her talk with Captain De Courcel. Had she taken time, or had she been able to reflect that her talk with De Courcel, being in French, could be understood by neither, even if they had heard, she probably would not have given way. Moreover, there is this excuse for her, she did not know how long they had been within hearing; she had not observed Alula come in from the balcony to open the door to Ali, whom she had seen in the street.



But there is no need to pity Molly in her fainting, because, as it chanced, it was the best thing she could have done for her own purpose.

She looked very beautiful, lying on the carpet with her arms outspread, and Ali, as he gazed, felt burn in him the first spark of intimate concern for her. Alula at such a moment was but a child, she had no experience at all of fainting, and she merely looked on with clasped hands and wide eyes of amazement and dread. Ali had no experience either, but when he saw De Courcel, who probably had, kneel by Molly, open her bodice, undo her corset, and proceed to slap her palms—the palms in which a mysterious fate had been seen, but not explained—he thought the operation rude and unkindly.

“No, no!” said he. “That is not good!”

Although he was not very tall, he was very strong. He pushed De Courcel away so brusquely that the Frenchman almost fell, took Molly up in his arms without difficulty, and looked around for a couch to lay her upon. Just then, as at his touch, Molly began to revive; she breathed forth a fragrant sigh of relief, raised her arms, and—to Ali’s astonishment—clasped them about his neck. Whether Molly knew what she was about, or merely obeyed an un-



conscious instinct to cling to what supported her, I will not seek to determine. But the effect on Ali was remarkable. He blushed like a boy, partly from a sudden sense of shame, partly from a new sense of pleasure. He laid her upon the couch, and stood over her.

"Yes," he murmured, "it is now better—far better; it is well."

As for De Courcel, he said nothing; but plainly, as he looked at Ali and glanced at Alula, he gave himself furiously to thought. Nor did Alula say a word, but she stood with hands clenched, and with a passion of jealousy flashing from her eyes.

When on the couch, Molly quickly came to herself without further aid or encouragement. She opened her eyes and looked around; then looked down upon her own disarray, and obviously understood and remembered. Her first thought was for appearances.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, drawing her bodice together. "Will someone ring, please?" De Courcel pounced at the electric button. She put a hand to her brow. "I fainted, I suppose?" she murmured. "How very silly of me!"

"Woman is weak," said Ali, sententiously. "But now you are better."



She scanned his face closely; she saw there nothing but blended shyness and kindness, and she was reassured. A maid appeared.

"Help me to my room, Mary," said Molly. "Will you come with me, Alula? You gentlemen will excuse my dismissal of you."

De Courcel reached the door to hold it open. "I will give myself the pleasure," said he, as he bowed, "to call to-morrow and inquire for madame."

She merely inclined her head and passed out.

De Courcel and Ali left the flat together. When they were in the street, Ali put a question which it troubled De Courcel to answer.

"Why," he asked, in the Moorish speech, "did the Lalla Neale sink on the floor as one dead when I entered?"

It was a question which had to be answered at once; and De Courcel, on the spur of the insistent moment, answered:

"The sight of you, sidi, and Alula together overcame her heart. As you wisely said, sidi, woman is weak."

Ali said no more; but his glance informed the Frenchman that the truth of his answer was doubted. Presently De Courcel proposed to go his own way, while Ali went his.



"Nay," said Ali "come with me and smoke a cigar; the hour is not late."

The Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan shared chambers in the Temple with Dr. Neale. If De Courcel went with Ali, he was almost certain to meet the doctor; and the doctor and he (for some reason which did not lie in him) were somewhat cool in their relations. He therefore sought to make excuse; but, as soon as he began, Ali interrupted him.

"Come," said he, in English, taking the Frenchman's arm. "I wish it. Please."

And De Courcel, because he wished, for his own ends, to be agreeable to Ali, yielded and went. They took a hansom, and in a few minutes they arrived at the Embankment entrance to the Middle Temple. The chambers were an ample suite in the new building overlooking the gardens. The building is fine, and the site is splendid; and De Courcel (who had been in the chambers before) envied the doctor and the Prince their joint abode.

Dr. Neale was in; and it caught the Frenchman's notice that chair and couch were littered with clothing, gun-cases, and guns.

"Ah, dear doctor," said De Courcel, in French, "you travel? You go away for *le sport*?"



"The Prince and I," said the doctor, "are invited to Scotland to shoot. We go early to look at Edinburgh and other places, and to avoid the rush before the Twelfth."

"What is the Twelfth, my dear doctor?" he asked.

"Ah, you do not know? It is the great day when begins the great shooting of the grouse. And the grouse, my dear Captain, is a bird that is very good to eat."

"And you will make a *battue*—a great slaughter? My compliments, dear doctor. You others, you English, you always say, do you not: 'It is a fine day; let us go and kill something'?"

"Yes," said the doctor, curtly; "we always like to kill something—if it be only a lie."

De Courcel always managed to rub Dr. Neale the wrong way. Meanwhile he had been set down in a chair at the open bow window, with that magnificent sweep of the Thames between Westminster and Blackfriars before his eyes, with a cigar between his lips, and with wine of Burgundy ready to his hand.

"Ah," he exclaimed, looking out, "it is splendid—it is magnificent! You are very agreeably situated here!"

Then Ali caught and held his attention by addressing an odd question to the doctor.



“What, my learned cousin,” he asked, in Moorish, “is the meaning of these words: *Voo mantay! Voo mantay! Mashamma mantay!*?”

“What are the words, Ali?” said the doctor. “I know not the words.”

But De Courcel recognized the words at once. They were those which Ali must have overheard on entering Madame Neale’s drawing-room—the words which she uttered to De Courcel himself before she fell in her faint: “*Vous mentez! Vous mentez! Méchamment mentez!*” (“You lie! You lie! Wickedly lie!”)

“I conceive, cousin,” said Ali with a frown, “that I speak the words of plainness. As my ear heard the words, so doth my tongue utter them.”

“Of a truth, Ali,” said the doctor, “I know not the words. Are they Moorish—Arabic?”

“Nay, cousin,” said Ali, impatiently. “Surely they are English; an English mouth uttered them.”

“I think I know,” then put in De Courcel, “what the Sidi Ali would be at.”

And thus he cleverly got his own tale told. Ali had shown a surprising restraint and subtlety in seeking to understand what had happened in Molly’s drawing-room, but he was far more subtle than Ali; he was, as the Bible says of the serpent, “more subtle than any beast of the field.”



"I dined this evening with Madame Neale. After dinner we talked—but we talked—of the days when I had the felicity of her conversation in Morocco. She did felicitate me on my fortune in passing from being a Captain of Moorish artillery to being agent of his Shereefian Highness the Sultan in England, and she said: '*Vous montez! Vous montez! Vous marchez à monter!*'" ("You rise! You rise! You go on to rise!") "Instantly, on the word, Sidi Ali appeared with Alula, and Madame Neale sank down in a faint from the heat, from the sudden appearance of the sidi, from I know not what."

"*Voo mantay,*" murmured Ali, thoughtfully, repeating his own pronunciation.

"Ah!" exclaimed the doctor, hearing it with a new suggestion. "*Vous mentez?* It might be that!"

"Sir," said De Courcel, "do you say I lie?"

"No, sir," answered the doctor, drily. "I only considered how much difference the change of a little vowel might make. But," he continued, "Molly fainted, did she? I never heard of her doing such a thing before. She was better, I suppose, before you left her?"

"She was better," answered De Courcel, "and gone to her chamber."



"I wonder," said the doctor, turning to Ali, "if I ought to run round and see if she expects to be able to travel to-morrow?"

It is doubtful whether Captain De Courcel had anything you could call "a heart," properly and figuratively speaking. But he had a certain sensibility, a certain pride in himself and his cleverness, and if we regard that as a target, the doctor's question was a random shot which hit the centre.

"Ah," said he, with a smile, "Madame Neale—does she also travel to-morrow?"

"Yes," answered the doctor. "We all travel together."

"Ah! ah!" murmured the Frenchman, in a tone of agreeable, congratulatory surprise. "And to the same place?"

"Yes," said the doctor; "we all go north."

"To the Countess," added Ali, with a smile. "All! To shoot the grouse."

"And the ladies also shoot the grouse?" murmured the Frenchman. "Happy grouse!"

But he had heard enough, more than enough, and he made haste to depart. He begged that he might be excused for abandoning their agreeable conversation, but he had much work to do that night, very much work to prepare for the Sid' El



Helba, who was coming soon to England on his special mission. For him was no holiday, no shooting of grouse; at least not yet. He rose to go.

"And," asked Ali, at the last, somewhat wistfully one would have said, "you cannot tell why Madame Neale fell on the floor in a faint? No?"

"My dear Prince," said De Courcel, "I can tell no more than I have told."

But when he was out he said to himself, while he flung away the end of his cigar with a vicious jerk: "The foolish beast! She thinks to run away and escape me? But she is at the end of a cord, and the cord is around her pretty neck!"

He returned to his hotel in the neighborhood of Leicester-square, and immediately wrote an appeal to Miss Cameron. If she loved him, if she had any regard for his fortune, for his future prosperity, she must contrive to get him invited to the Countess's to "shoot the grouse."



## CHAPTER XII.

## MISS CAMERON'S DREAM.

"It is impossible to get you invited to join the house party. It is fully made up, and consists chiefly of 'The Friends of Moorish Freedom.' But I have engaged for you a lodging close by, and you can come when you like. That, I imagine, will suit your purpose, which evidently is not to see me but to carry on your dangerous schemes."

That is the reply which De Courcel received from Miss Cameron after more than a week. It was dated from the Countess's place in the Highlands, whither it had followed De Courcel's friend from her London address. The arrangement made for him was not much to his liking, but he accepted it for want of a better, and in due time he found himself turned out of a slow train, to his great amazement, into a wild and desolate country, where



were no trees and no cultivated fields, nothing but a dark land and gloomy, frowning mountains, to which the mists clung.

"This," said he to himself, "must be the back end of the universe."

The lodging prepared for him seemed as cheerless and horrible as the country. It was not at an inn—for it seemed to him that there were no inns in all that inhospitable land. It was at the bare, meagre cottage of a gamekeeper, and it needed some time and effort on the part of his friend, Miss Cameron, to convince him that the lodging was the best that could be found, and that it had not been chosen to annoy, humiliate, and "destroy" him.

Meanwhile, Molly and Alula, the Grand Shereef of Tetuan and his cousin the doctor, and the rest, were lodged spaciouly and comfortably in the grim old castle which had once dominated the wild inhabitants of that wild region. Even if De Courcel had not desired to have ready access to these, it would be necessary for him to show himself with some plausible reason for his coming to that remote place, for he could not possibly remain hidden, and it would never do for him to be discovered skulking.

He had purchased for the trip a knickerbocker



suit and a deerstalker hat with a feather (he insisted on the feather, although the London tailor told him it was not the English fashion), and in these and patent shoes he walked to the castle the day after his arrival, with his reason for coming ready in his mouth. He had not walked a long way before he discovered that his patent shoes were a mistake; and he was tramping along the winding avenue of the castle in no agreeable temper, when a voice from among the dwarf larches that bordered the avenue made him halt.

“You think you look an English gentleman, but you do not.”

And the dark-eyed Alula, brilliant with health, pushed through the trees and stood before him. He set his feet together and whipped off his deerstalker, feather and all, in a low obeisance.

“Beautiful Lalla,” said De Courcel, in Moorish, “you appear in this dark land like the sun in his brightness, like a lily in bloom in a country that is without flowers.”

“I wish,” said she, haughtily, in good English though with a doubtful accent, “to speak nothing—only English. I wish to say English words to all people.”

“How then, miss,” asked De Courcel, who could



manage English pretty well, "will you make your father to comprehend when he come soon?"

"Soon—does he come?" she cried, breaking into her Moorish speech.

"Fair Lalla," answered De Courcel, following her into her own language, "the Sid' El Helba will come very soon. He has written a letter to me from Tangier, saying that he will in six days remove his feet from the solid land, and set them upon the quaking ship that will carry him over the heaving sea."

"Then," said Alula, making a quick calculation on her fingers, "he is already on the ship that shakes and goes without wind, for your letter must have taken a week to travel."

"By this hour," said De Courcel, "he must be upon the uncertain sea. And that, fair Lalla, is the very reason why I have journeyed hither, to inform the daughter of the Sid' El Helba and Ali of Tetuan."

"Why did you not send a letter?" asked Alula.

"It seemed to me better to come," said the Frenchman. "Moreover, it is my duty, as I have already told the Lalla, to follow all the movements of Ali of Tetuan."

"Show me my father's letter," demanded Alula, as on a sudden suspicion.



He clapped his hands to his pockets, thrust them in, but found nothing. The pretence was too patent even to deceive a very young girl, and Alula was not so young in mind as she might seem.

"I have it not," said he. "It must be left in London."

"Sidi Captain," said she, shaking a finger at him, "you never had that letter. You have received no letter from my father. Why should my father not also have written a letter to me?"

"Because," said De Courcel, with a spiteful smile, "the Lalla, fair though she be, is not able to read."

"My father would not have withheld his hand for that," retorted Alula. "And," she added, "I could have asked the Sidi Captain to read it to me. But the Sidi Captain has told lies. The truth is not in him. . . . Why, then, have you come here?" she demanded, in a sudden burst of anger. "To plan more mischief against Ali of Tetuan!"

The subtle Frenchman regarded the girl an instant, with a new thought working in him.

"It is strange, Lalla Alula," said he, "that you so utterly mistake me. Why should I seek to do mischief to the Grand Shereef? Shall I tell the Lalla a secret thing? There is one here whom she does not love, a woman. Ha! Is it not so? The thought



of the Lalla Neale is bitterness to the heart of the Lalla Alula." Alula involuntarily clenched her little fists. "It is truly the Lalla Neale," said De Courcel, "that I seek here, and not your Ali of Tetuan at all."

Alula considered him a moment.

"Why do you seek the Lalla Neale?" she asked.

"I wish to marry her."

"Then you love her?" exclaimed the girl.

"Passionately—with all my heart!" said the Frenchman.

"It is strange," she mused, in suspicion. "Your words a moment since sounded as if you hated her."

"I love her so much," he explained, "that I hate her desire to avoid me. See, Lalla. Let us make a bargain. I will help you with Ali of Tetuan, if you will help me with the Lalla Neale."

He thought she was certain to agree. After a moment's thought, and a careful scrutiny of his face and person, she surprised him by refusing.

"No," said she, frankly, "I will not enter into a bargain with you. I do not trust you. You are wicked, and you plan against the Lalla Neale something I do not know. I do not love her; but I will not help you in your wickedness against her."



"So be it, Lalla," said he. "Then I cannot help you with the Grand Shereef."

"Sir Captain," said she, in the serenity of maidenly reserve and pride, "I have not asked your help."

She turned to walk off, and let him continue his approach to the castle.

"All are gone," she called after him presently, "to shoot the grouse—except the Countess."

He continued his disagreeable tramp in his patent shoes, saw the Countess, told her the same plausible fib as he had tried upon Alula to account for his presence, and was invited to dinner. He returned in the evening in good time for dinner. The first person he encountered was Molly.

"Come in here," said she, in a firm tone of authority; "I want to speak to you."

He followed her into the library, somewhat surprised that she had forestalled him in seeking an interview: plainly, she had recovered her nerve.

"Ah," he began, in his supple and voluble French, "how charming, dear lady, you look in this abominable country! But—what a country!"

"Attention, sir!" said she, quite calmly but severely. "We have not time to waste on banalities and compliments. You have pursued me here. Why?"



"Pursued *you*, dear madame?"

"Oh, I know the lie you told the Countess; but it does not deceive me. Why have you come?"

"Must I be rude—brutal?"

"Be as rude and brutal as you like; you cannot show yourself more rude nor more brutal than I know you to be."

"Then, dear madame, I beg to remind you of our interrupted conversation in your very agreeable apartment in London. I then, dear madame, did you the honor to ask you to be my wife."

"And I then, sir, made you the answer that I had other designs for myself."

"I then begged to remind you, madame, of reasons why you should reconsider that decision. You have reconsidered, have you not?"

"There is no need for reconsideration. I knew then, as I know now, that I would not marry you under any circumstances. I will only marry a gentleman; I would not marry a spy and a bully if every hair of his head and his beard were hung with diamonds of Golconda!"

"You will permit me to say, dear madame, that your tone is singularly unbecoming. Do you forget, madame, that a word from me to Ali of Tetuan would bring upon you the fury of the unquenchable



desire for vengeance that burns in him night and day?"

She was pale for an instant; but she never lost her resolute demeanor nor lowered the bold front which from the first moment of the interview she had presented to the Frenchman.

"I expected you to threaten me in that way," said she. "I do not wish to be troubled with threats. How much money do you want to go away and trouble me no more?"

"Money, madame?" he exclaimed, in indignation.

"Really, why this pretence? What else but money did you look for in proposing to marry me?"

"One of the most charming and beautiful women in the world!" he answered, with his hand on his heart.

"Heavens!" she cried, stung for the instant to real anger. "For downright brutal insolence to women and want of sentiment, commend me to a polished Frenchman! Again I ask: 'What sum of money? Five thousand pounds?'"

"Ah, madame!" he exclaimed. "That fatal sum!"

Pallor overspread her again; and she was silent. But she had truly mistaken her method with him. He rose.

"No, madame!" said he. "No money! I will not take your money! I will make you marry me!"



"Never!" said she.

"Be it!" said he. "Then it is a duel between us, madame?"

"Absolutely," said she.

He opened the door for her, and she passed out without another word.

That evening the hospitable Countess asked Captain De Courcel if he would like to join the shooting-party of next morning. He thanked her effusively, and said that he would. He appeared in good time, and borrowed a gun. The shooting party was made up of both men and women. Of the latter the best shots were Molly and Miss Cameron; and they, therefore, were to the fore with the best shots among the men—of whom Dr. Neale was one. Captain De Courcel was not a bad shot, but he was unacquainted with the ways of the grouse and the method of the sportsmen. Yet he was excited by the sport, and eager to get at the birds. He thrust himself recklessly into the line of fire of the other guns. He did that once too often. He was in Molly's line of fire. He received her whole charge, and fell as if dead.

"Now you've done it, Molly!" murmured Dr. Dick, who was near her. "For a clever shot like you, that was rather clumsy!"



All who saw the accident ran towards the fallen man, whom a couple of gillies had already raised.

"Oh, I am so sorry!" moaned Molly, looking terribly troubled and exceedingly pale—which was but natural under the circumstances.

"Oh, you couldn't help it, my dear," said Miss Cameron, but the glance she gave Molly plainly meant: "You spiteful beast! I shouldn't wonder if you did it on purpose!"

Dr. Neale examined De Courcel, and ordered him to be carried to the castle. There the doctor discovered that the charge of shot had lodged singularly high, and had scattered very little. It was feared that some of the shot had entered the lungs. But the Frenchman had great strength and vitality. He had never lost consciousness; and he could talk with tolerable freedom. Miss Cameron established herself as his nurse, and was alone with him for some hours after the doctor had completed his estimate of the case.

"Will he die?" asked Molly, meeting her brother-in-law with a white face.

"I don't think he will," answered Dr. Dick.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed.

Yet Molly continued a prey to anxiety; for what might not De Courcel be telling Miss Cameron in



her watch by his bedside? The evening brought her some reason for fear.

Dr. Neale ate his dinner hurriedly, and went to relieve Miss Cameron. Miss Cameron came to dinner and remained with the company during the evening. They talked of the wet weather and of the wonderfully gloomy scenery which predisposed to superstitions, to doleful and foreboding thoughts; and they talked of the unfortunate accident of the morning.

"I felt sure," said Miss Cameron, "that something terrible was going to happen during the day, for I had the strangest and most horrible dream."

The whole company kept silence to hear; for Miss Cameron had the second-sight, and her dreams always had a meaning.

"I dreamt," said she, "that I was in a hot, hot Eastern city. The streets were dirty and narrow, and I had to pant for breath. I was wandering there, seeking something—I don't know what—and I found myself in a pleasant house with a cool court, with a fountain and a garden of orange-trees beyond. And I went into a room of that house, and came upon two young men in green turbans. One of them I knew at once: it was Prince Ali of Tetuan. The other—I could not see his face——"



"It was my brother Mohammed," broke in Ali, quite simply. "Yes?"

"And then," she continued, "I became aware that there were also two other men there—Englishmen; and I knew one of them to be Dr. Neale. We said how-d'e-do, and we talked. And then there came a great clatter out in the street of horsemen, and a hammering at the gate. In a minute the place was filled with black soldiers, and there was fighting; and the second man in the green turban was dragged away by them!"

"My brother!" said Ali, with a catch in his voice. He sprang to his feet, stepped across the room to Miss Cameron, seized her wrist with a fierce grip, and looked into her face with blazing eyes. "And who bring the soldiers? Who say my brother was there? I look for that man forever! Say who he was!"

Miss Cameron was somewhat terrified by his vehemence.

"I seemed to myself to know who had betrayed him," she faltered, looking down in uncertainty.

"Hah!" growled Ali. "Say who! Quick! Please! I wish it!"

"Oh, it is too terrible!" broke out Molly, in dire distress, sobbing and weeping. "Don't go on!"



Don't let them go on! It was then that my poor husband was killed!"

"I seemed to know," said Miss Cameron, recovering herself and grasping Ali's hand; "but I cannot now remember!"

And he fell back to his seat with a sigh and a groan.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## MOLLY AND ALI.

BUT these things did not warn Molly of the danger of persisting in her resolution to marry Ali, and become Grand Shereefia and Princess of Tetuan. On the contrary, they seemed to make her more resolved than ever to hasten that consummation of her ambition. She even made the dangerous dream of Miss Cameron—if it was a dream—a means of advancing her purpose. It gave her an excuse for talking sympathetically with Ali about his brother and his brother's schemes, and of urging him to fulfill them. For there floated before her and led her on a brilliant vision of greatness—of Ali become the Emperor of a reformed Morocco (was he not already of more esteem than the Sultan among the people?), and of herself as the Empress. To accomplish the fulfillment of so splendid a vision was surely worth a great effort. Many more scrupulous people than Molly would have agreed with her about that.



She devoted herself to Ali. She shot with him, she walked with him, and she talked with him, and taught him English—taught him so well that he made far more rapid progress than with his professional paid tutor in London. That devotion was generally noted, and Dr. Neale took occasion to remark on it to Molly, when they chanced to meet alone one morning at breakfast.

“It is not often lately that I have had the opportunity of a word with you, Molly,” said he.

“Do you miss it?” said she, with a laugh.

“Awfully,” said he. “You’re very thick with Ali, aren’t you?”

“Pretty thick,” she answered.

“They make remarks about it.”

“Let them,” said she.

“You’ve determined to go through with it, then?”

“Quite.”

“He’s young,” said the doctor; “and he’s very much of a barbarian.”

“I’m a voracious widow, you mean,” she laughed. “Well, I am, and without scruple and without compunction. I can swallow him easily.”

“But, you’ll excuse me, Molly, he does not seem to me a man to be easily caught or kept.”

“My dear Dick,” said Molly, “you’ve read a good



deal in your time, and you have probably read of the Frenchman who said that a clever and good-looking woman could marry any man she wished to marry. I wish to marry Ali, and I shall marry him."

"Very well," said he. "But I think you will regret it."

There was no more to be said. If she was resolved, she was resolved; and argument was useless.

So Molly's scheme went forward towards a successful issue. Molly was clever, and Molly was beautiful and attractive. Her greatest enemy could not deny she had these qualities; and between them Ali, who was not fish-blooded, was ensnared. An unrehearsed adventure brought matters to a crisis.

They happened to find themselves together and away from their party in the search for grouse. In leaping from one stone to another in a boggy place, Molly slipped and twisted her ankle. She tried to walk, but could not. Without hesitation Ali took her up in his arms.

"I will carry you," said he, in obvious triumph, "all the way!"

He had not held her so since the evening she had fainted, and the renewed contact, with Molly



quite conscious and alert, seemed too much for him. He strained her to his breast and kissed her over and over, murmuring: "Beautiful love!—beautiful! Sweet love!—sweet!" He was still more inflamed to discover in a second or two that Molly was returning his embrace and his kiss. The boulder which had produced the crisis was handy, and he sat down upon it with Molly still in his arms.

"You are mine!" said he.

"I am yours!" she answered.

And for some while little more was said. At length they resumed speech.

"And you will be my wife?" said he.

"Yes," she whispered in his ear.

And the whisper was intoxicatingly sweet to him. It suggested the shyness and subtlety, the secrecy and shame of love. His Eastern sense of romance was fired, and he became poetic and rhythmic. And still his brother was in all his thought.

"Mohammed," said he, "was worthier of you than I am. But we will go away to the country and the people that my brother loved, and we will fulfill the purpose of Mohammed's life. Mohammed was wise and brave. I am only strong and brave; but you, my love, will add the wisdom. You have, I think, the wisest head in all this world. The



great King Solomon of ancient days was not wiser than you. When I show you, brave and beautiful, to my people, I will add also: 'She is the wisest of women. She is for wisdom and understanding more precious than rubies!' We will go away soon, my love, to my own land and my own people. I sicken at heart for them. There is something of English in my color, but my blood and my life are all Moorish."

Then she answered wisely that she would go with him to his own land and help him to fulfill his purpose.

"But we must move warily, my Ali. Do not forget that the Sultan is your enemy still, and seeks your life——"

"The Fileli usurper!" broke in Ali. "The son of a slave!"

"And also," she continued, "the Sid' El Helba, and it may be others. It will therefore be prudent to say nothing of our marriage until we marry."

And Ali agreed that it would be wise; and then they set out to accomplish the five or six miles between them and the castle. They took between two and three hours to get over the ground, for Ali carried Molly, and she insisted upon his taking frequent rests. When they approached the castle



she made him set her down, and she limped with his aid. But all the world guessed, when they heard of the accident, that she had not limped all the way. Some even doubted whether there was a sprain at all, and thought it was fortunate for her tale that the doctor was a relation.

That evening there came what Molly had been anxiously on the watch for ever since her last passage with De Courcel—a request from him for an interview with Ali. He was recovering, and was able to see others than his nurse and the doctor. At the first opportunity after De Courcel had set forth his reason for coming north, she had said to Ali: “He is a subtle, crafty, and desperate man. Moreover, he is a spy. If he ever seeks private speech with you, or secretly sends you a letter, let me know, and I will tell you something.”

That evening then, Ali came to the couch where she reclined with her hurt ankle, and said: “The Frenchman seeks to speak with me alone.”

She turned very pale. It was a desperate crisis, but she had prepared to meet it. The Frenchman, doubtless, intended to denounce her—to destroy her with a well-laid mine. But if he could not mine, she could counter-mine.

“Come and sit down here,” said she. (They



were in the drawing-room of the castle.) "Let us talk Moorish, and it will be as if we talked alone."

So they sat down together among the company, but not of them, Ali eager and wondering.

"I do not know," Molly began, "what the Frenchman may have to say; but I seek to warn thee, Sidi Ali, to be careful. He is thy enemy since he works for El Helba, and he is also mine."

"Thy enemy?" exclaimed Ali. "Wherefore an enemy to thee?"

"A beast balked of a mate," said Molly, "is ever spiteful and vicious. I have refused him with scorn, sidi, and he may guess that I favor thee."

"He dared to put forth his hand to thee? He?" said Ali, with difficulty restraining his rage. "Ha! And that was why I found thee fainting?"

"That was why."

"The beast! The pig! The dog of a Frenchman! I will denounce him for the basest of men! He to seek thee!"

"Nay, sidi," said Molly, "be calm and wary, for he is subtle as a serpent. And there is another thing of more import against him than that he sought me. I fear to name it, for I have no surety, but only a strong suspicion—the suspicion of a woman to whom a man is displeasing."



"The suspicion of a wise woman," said Ali.

"I think I have already convinced the sidi that the Frenchman is here, and was in Fez, the spy of his country, as well as the servant of the Sultan. He takes the pay of both; but he is a man greedy of money, and without scruple how he may get it."

"That is reasonable and true," said Ali.

"Now, Sidi Ali, who—I hesitate whether I should say it——"

"Say on," said he. "Say on."

"Who was more subtle, or knew more that happened in Fez than he? He had his spies and reporters among the people of Fez themselves, for the men of Fez are as false as they are proud. The Frenchman is ever jealous of the Englishman. On what house, therefore, in Fez would he keep closer watch than on the abode of the English doctor, the rather that I dwelt there? When you and your brother came that day, some bird of the air must have carried the news. Someone saw you come. Who? Who saw, or who heard of your being seen, and sold the news?"

"By the beard of the Prophet! By the name of Allah! It must be true! It is plain! I have been a fool not to think of it! But you are wise! Now the traitor's life is in my hands, and this is a fit place to end it!"



He spoke in a low, quick voice, as if he felt little passion. But the fashion of his face was changed; his hair, of head and beard, seemed to stiffen and bristle, and his fingers worked like the claws of a wild beast. He was evidently in a paroxysm of passion, and Molly grew terribly afraid that he might go straightway and murder the Frenchman. So she spoke soothingly of the necessity for prudence.

"Dear sidi," said she, "be calm and wary. Remember this is not your own land. If you sought to take vengeance here, the law of the land would take your life, although you are a stranger and a prince. The law of the English is no respecter of persons. Moreover, we have no actual proof that he is the man. Wait, sidi, and nurse your vengeance in your warm breast. Wait till we return to your own land. He is certain to return also. Then you may seek out proof that he is the man; and then you may freely take your revenge on him. But, my dear sidi, be wise now. Do or say nothing rash, and let him not even guess that you suspect him; else he may fear, and henceforward avoid you."

"Your counsel is the best of wisdom and prudence," said Ali, "and I will follow it. It is given by the most prudent and most beautiful of women."



So in that frame of mind he departed to hold his interview with De Courcel, and Molly lay on her couch waiting his return—lay in a torture of anxiety, as if on a rack of the Inquisition. He returned after a few minutes, although to her the time seemed to have been hours long.

“It is well,” said Ali, in answer to her inquiring look, “that you gave me the advice to keep a command upon myself—for I should have torn him to pieces where he lay.”

“What did he say?” asked Molly,—you may guess with how much eagerness and anxiety.

“Say? He uttered not—because I would not permit him—but he let peep from his mind a most monstrous accusation! Truly he is your enemy! A spiteful, vicious enemy!”

“What was his accusation?” Molly asked, with dry mouth.

“This he said: ‘It has been brought to my ears, sidi, that you have become greatly interested in a certain lady who is in this castle.’ I answered that it might be that I was interested in a lady; it was natural to be interested in ladies. ‘But,’ said he, ‘beware, sidi, of the particular lady whom I mean. She is attractive; she is beautiful; she is subtle. She will ensnare thee if thou dost not beware. But



take heed; for her hand is soiled with the most abominable crime thou canst conceive. And because I have knowledge of it, she has tried to shoot me.' "

Molly breathed again. "What saidst thou?"

"I forbade him to speak. I called him pig, and dog, and liar; and I said I would tear him all to pieces if he said aught more about the lady. He said: 'You will hear me one day, sidi. I will wait. It is *check*; it is one to her.' What could he mean?"

"Perhaps," murmured Molly, "he thought of the game. And he said no more?"

"He said no more." She put out her hand to him. He took it and looked at it, murmuring: "It is a white, sweet, pure hand."

A sound that was something of a sigh and something of a sob fluttered from her mouth, for that was the hand in which she had received the price of his brother's life.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## MAN AND WIFE.

MANY of my readers may exclaim: "How could Molly play so terribly dangerous a game? How could she propose, and resolutely carry out her desire, to marry the brother of the man whom she had so infamously betrayed?"

If you consider Molly's case with careful thought, you will see that it is probable she had no proper idea of the enormity of her offence; and if she believed that she had done no great wrong in selling her news of Ali's brother, it is probable that she saw no great odium and not much danger in marrying Ali. She would prefer that he should know nothing of what she had done, and she strove valiantly to keep the knowledge from him, for he had a passionate prejudice against it; but, at the worst, if he finally got to know, she probably flattered herself that she would be forgiven.

In that mood, watchful, but tolerably light-hearted,



Molly continued. And the shooting-party at the castle broke up, and went their several ways. De Courcel—almost completely recovered—returned to London; and so did Ali and Alula and Molly and the doctor, because the Sid' El Helba was expected to reach England in September on his special mission for the further discussion of a Commercial Treaty.

As soon as the clever and active Molly was established again in her elegant flat, she set herself to hasten on her marriage with Ali. She was determined that it should be accomplished before the arrival of the Moorish Ambassador; for who knew what difficulties might then arise to hinder or blight her scheme if it were unfulfilled? She had not intended that anyone should know of the marriage beforehand; but reflection told her that she must consult someone concerning the proper kind of ceremony that would make her union with Ali binding and indissoluble. He was a Mohammedan, although she was (presumably) a Christian. It was impossible, therefore, that the ceremony should be performed in a church; and it could not be performed in a mosque, for the sufficient reason that there was no mosque then in London. She took Dr. Dick, therefore, into her confidence. At first he refused to have anything to do with the matter. "It is not, nor it cannot come



to, good," said he, quoting the poet; but at length, after cajolment and entreaty, he advised that the only ceremony possible was the civil, before a registrar, and he finally consented to act as witness.

So one morning before twelve—an unusually early hour for her—Molly left her flat in a very elegant heliotrope dress, stepped into a hansom in Victoria-street, and was driven beyond Temple Bar to a registry office. There she met Prince Ali of Tetuan, faultlessly arrayed like an English gentleman in top hat and morning coat, with a flower in his buttonhole. Dr. Dick, arrayed in like manner, presented Molly with a small bouquet of choice flowers. And then, in the presence of an impassive registrar in a buttoned frock-coat, Mary Neale, widow, and Ali Ben Mohammed Ben Abdullah, Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan, in the Sultanate of Morocco, were joined in wedlock; whereof Richard Neale, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, and John Tompkins, laborer (and lame hanger-on of the Registrar's Court in the hope of casual half crowns) duly certified themselves as witnesses.

Molly thus attained the first stage of her ambition; she was Grand Shereefia and Princess of Tetuan: and it was in an apparent suffusion of happiness that



she drove with her husband and Dr. Neale down to the river and embarked on a steam launch. That was Dr. Dick's generous arrangement for conveying them to the wedding breakfast, which he had ordered at Greenwich.

It was impossible that the ubiquitous newspaper reporter should miss noting so extraordinary a fact as the marriage of a prince at a registry office; and the later editions of the evening papers all contained the news, given with formal exactitude. On their return in the afternoon to Westminster, Dr. Dick pointed out the newspaper bills, held with stones in the gutter, and flying from the hands of howling and scurrying boys: "Marriage of a Prince at a Registry." He bought several papers, and showed Molly and Ali that it was truly their marriage that formed the tid-bit of news. Molly professed to be astonished; but she was truly flattered and triumphant: she delighted in publicity.

The newly-married pair went home to spend their honeymoon; and their home was Molly's flat. That had been Molly's suggestion. Since they would probably depart very soon to Ali's own land, it was not (she declared) worth while to take a house, with the attendant trouble and expense: her flat was ready, sufficient for both.



When she entered, she found a telegram on the hall table addressed to "Mrs. Neale." She tore it open. It was in French, and signed De Courcel. In some astonishment and trepidation she withdrew with it to her room, leaving her husband to enter the drawing-room.

"My compliments," she read, in French. "You have played *check* again. Next I play. *Mate* in one move.—DE COURCEL."

Plainly he used a former figure of speech, and obviously he alluded to her marriage. But how did he guess that she would return to her flat, and would not depart on a wedding trip? She was disturbed—she could not deny it to herself—very much disturbed; for it was not an agreeable missive of congratulation to receive on the threshold of her new married life.

While Molly thus considered the ominous telegram in the privacy of her own room, a scene was being enacted in the drawing-room which would have amazed her.

When Ali went to the drawing-room, he found the door held against him from within. With the exertion of a little of his strength, he pushed it open and entered. Alula fled across the room towards the balcony.



"Thou mischievous monkey, Alula," he said, with a laugh, talking in Moorish. "What meanest thou by keeping the door against me?"

"Go away!" she cried, halting suddenly at the sound of his voice. "Go, go!" she stamped. "False, wicked man! Abominable pig! Look not upon me! Speak not to me! Thou art truly hateful, and I hate thee! Thou art ugly, and I loathe thee! Thou art base, and I spurn thee!"

And at that she burst into tears, sank on a couch, and curled herself up, with her pretty head plunged in a cushion.

"Ai, ai!" cried Ali, in amazement. "But what is this, Alula?"

She raised her head, with her black curls all in disorder, and showed a face all pitiful and bewept. In a tone charged with reproach, she said:

"Hast thou not married the Lalla Neale? Thou hast not told me; but the slave of the Lalla has! And now thou wilt live with her here in this house, and I must go away!"

"Ha! is that all, little one?" said Ali. "There is no need for thee to go away; and soon we shall all return to our own dear land together, and walk in our gardens of oranges and roses."

"But that is not all, ungrateful one!" she cried.



"And never, never will I walk with thee in a garden of roses! Why, oh, why, hast thou married her? Dost thou think, foolish man, that she will love thee as I would love thee? Hath she not had one husband already? Is she not a wise woman? Doth she not look before and after? Is she not a foreign woman, while I—even I—am of your own race, your own blood, your own land?"

"And is not she also?" faltered Ali. "For am not I of two races, and two lands?"

"Hast thou not many a time told me: 'My color only is English; my heart and my life are all Moorish'? See!" she cried, leaping like a flash to her feet, and spreading wide her arms, "am I less beautiful than she? Am I less to be desired, less to be loved?"

"Nay, little one," said he, "thou art altogether lovely. But thou art young. And," he faltered, as if uncertain whether he should say it, "who knows how love comes? It blows, as the wind blows."

"But I know," said she, in a jealous flash, "how love for her came to thee! Am I not a woman, and have I not seen? She ensnared thee with her wiles this way and that; and who knew better than she how to set them, since she is wise and has had experience? She spread herself out, sidi, and thou wert caught like a fly in honey!"



"Silence, child!" cried Ali, with anger and dignity. "'Tis not of a stranger thou lettest thy tongue wag, but of my wife!"

"Pardon, sidi!" said Alula, crossing her hands on her bosom and bowing her head. "I have spoken foolishly. I am young, sidi," she added, with a touch of sarcasm; "but Allah be praised! I grow every minute older!" She turned away. "Ah, sidi, sidi!" she cried, while her bosom heaved and fluttered with a suppressed storm of sobbing, "thou knowest not what I have done for thee, nor what I will do! For thee I came to this land; and for thee I shall leave it. Henceforward I am dumb!"

She turned and slipped swiftly away. She must have heard the approach of Molly; for, as she closed one door, Molly opened the other.

That scene troubled Ali; but, after a long meditation, he decided to say nothing about it to his wife. For, semi-barbarian though he was, he valued a quiet, domestic life; and he considered it prudent not to incur the risk of raising the demon of jealousy on his newly-established hearth. Moreover, Alula must stay with them until the arrival of her father at least.

Before the end of September that distinguished ruffian arrived, with the new title of Basha. The very day after his arrival—the day on which it was



arranged that Alula would leave the flat in Victoria-street and go to her father's splendid lodging in Carlton-House Terrace—Molly had such a shock as she had never before experienced. She was on the point of conducting Alula to the Basha's abode, when the postman knocked and thrust through the letter-slit a letter. Molly picked it up. It was addressed to her husband; but the handwriting on the envelope—palpably French—roused her suspicion. Hesitation was but for an instant: she put the letter in her pocket.

When seated in the cab with Alula, she drew forth the letter and broke open the envelope. And then her fluttering suspicion rose and became a threatening vulture; for in her hand was a small document written in Arabic, but plainly signed in English: "April 24th, 189—.—MARY NEALE." It was the receipt she had given to the Sid' El Helba for five thousand pounds from the Treasury of the Sultan. It was not the original receipt—for that had been on parchment—but a copy on paper!

She readily guessed it had made by De Courcel from the original in the Basha's possession; and it had been sent without comment to her husband. If she had not intercepted it! The thought sickened her, and made her brain reel. She folded it back



into the envelope, and thrust it into the little handbag that she carried.

But, Heavens, what were her amazement and terror, when she returned home after leaving Alula at the Basha's, to open her bag and find no letter!



## CHAPTER XV.

## THE ARABIC DOCUMENT.

ALULA was very much interested in the house which the British Government had hired for the entertainment of her father. She had considerable trouble in correcting—out of her better acquaintance with English houses—the Basha's barbarous preconceptions of the uses of various things. She had to instruct him that he should not keep his tea-tray under the sofa; that he must not assemble all the clocks of the house in the drawing-room to hear their combined efforts at ticking and striking (as if they were British workmen!); that he should not go to sleep on the hearth-rug, nor go to bed on the dining-room table; that he must not make a mantle of a handsome brocade curtain that he fancied; and that it was not good manners to take an agreeable sweetmeat from his own mouth and pop it into his daughter's.

With such correction and instruction in righteous-



ness Alula's first day was sedulously occupied till she went to bed. Then she set forth her cherished private properties; and then she opened, among other things, a little handbag, of which Molly had long ago made her a present. She was surprised and puzzled to discover there a letter. She took it out and looked at it. Now it is a point to note that Alula's education, clever girl though she was, had only commenced since she came to England. In her own country she had been merely a female, denied instruction in reading and writing, denied even the possession of a soul, both of which in Morocco are accounted the monopolies of the masterful male. But in England she was a woman, and was treated better than if she were a man. She could, therefore, neither read nor write her own language, while she had learned in a few months to do both with English. Thus you will see that, while she could make nothing of the Arabic characters of the paper, she easily read the address on the envelope: "To Ali Ben Mohammed, Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan," and the name at the end of the paper, "MARY NEALE."

The names thus in strange conjunction set her thinking. How had that letter come into her bag? She recalled that, when she and Molly were about to leave the flat, a letter arrived of which Molly



took possession. Was not that in her hand the very letter? and the same letter also which Molly had opened and read in the cab with much attention? But evidently it had been sent to Ali. Why had Molly not given it to Ali at once? Alula was quick-witted, and she divined that Molly did not wish her husband to read that letter, to which her own name was attached. Why? There was the mystery. And how had the letter entered into Alula's hand-bag? With a leap of memory she clearly recalled that Molly carried a little bag similar to hers. What more likely than that Molly had thought she was putting the letter away in her own bag when she was thrusting it into Alula's? If that was not the explanation of Alula's possession of the letter, there was none.

Then came the question to Alula: What should she do with the letter? It was not hers, yet she might have a concern in it. The letter was addressed to Ali; therefore it was his. But Molly's name was at the end of it; therefore, in some sense, it might be hers too. And there was the place, "Fez," written in English, and the date, "April 24th, 189—," which was just before they had left Fez for England. She wondered what the letter contained, and she wished she could read it. Finally, she prepared to go to



bed without having determined what she should do with the letter.

She was in the midst of her preparations when a knock sounded on the door. She opened it. A maid was there, with the extraordinary intimation that a lady—"the Princess Ali"—wished very particularly to have a word with her. The Princess Ali, of course, was Molly, and instantly Alula suspected why she had come so late. She bade the maid conduct the Princess Ali there, and she thrust the letter into her bosom and was ready for her.

Molly, when she entered, could not hide her excitement and anxiety; and, with a woman's quick suspicion, Alula believed it must be for herself she feared. There must be something in the letter that she did not wish Ali to know, and Alula swiftly resolved what she would do.

"Dear Alula," said Molly, "have you found anything of mine?"

"Anything of yours?" asked Alula. "Where?"

"Oh," broke out Molly, "I am in trouble. I have lost something. It is a letter. I read it in the cab when I came with you, and I thought I put it in my little bag afterwards. But I can't have done that. I found out the cab afterwards, but the cabman hadn't seen it. And I have just remembered that



you carried a little bag like mine. I wonder if I put the letter in your bag instead of in my own?"

"There is my bag," said Alula.

"You have not opened it yet?" asked Molly.

"No," answered Alula, and thus committed herself to falsehood.

Molly pounced at the bag. "May I?" said she, and opened it.

It contained no letter. Molly shot a suspicious look at Alula, and that look killed a rising compunction in Alula's breast. Not for the world now would she confess that she had the letter.

"Is the letter of value?" asked Alula.

"To me only," answered Molly. "It is of no interest or value to any other person.

"Then why," thought Alula again, "did she not let it go to Ali? It contains something she does not wish him to know, and she fears for herself."

Molly departed with a desperate look upon her fair face, but Alula did not pity her. And that night before she slept, she made up her mind that she would at once set herself to learn to read her own language, that she might discover what that mysterious letter contained.

In the morning Alula hid the letter away until such time as she could read it, and so it happened



that Molly, as the days and weeks passed without the terrible document turning up against her, recovered something of her composure and serenity. She could not be quite serene, for she could not forget that the original still existed, and that another copy might appear at any moment. Therefore she ordained that all correspondence that came to the flat should be brought to her, and thus every letter to her husband, Prince Ali, passed through her hands.

But that watchful life was too tense and close a strain to be borne long; and Molly used all her influence for the speedy return of Ali to his own land, where the postmen cease from troubling and the telegraph's at rest. She had even made up her mind to apply in person to the Basha El Helba—Alula's father—for the Sultan's edict of banishment to be revoked, when her agreeable plan for aiding her husband behind his back was made impossible by events which she could not control.

The Basha El Helba had been made a great deal of by the British Government and the British public in London. He was new, and strange, and picturesque; and newspaper men found unending interest in his green turban (he claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet) and his white jelab, or mantle, in his inscrutable eyes and his Arab features. The



inscrutability of his eyes was mere common cunning, and the Arabian cast of his features was of the cross-bred type, which gave him the look of an intelligent goat. Indeed, one impudent journalist went so far as to write that, if a certain well-known novelist were arrayed in haik and turban, he might easily be mistaken for the Sid' El Helba. But even such flippancies only made people look at the Basha all the more eagerly when he drove in an open landau through the streets, and made them assemble in greater numbers to see him enter or leave his carriage, either at his temporary dwelling in Carlton-House Terrace or at the house of some great person whom he visited. Although it was not the season, he was overwhelmed with invitations, and after a visit to the country seat of the Prime Minister, he had the honor of being photographed in his company.

Now there were people who could not view these attentions as mere points of curiosity on the part of the public, and of politeness and policy on the part of statesmen and politicians. "The Friends of Moorish Freedom," having better hearts than heads, and stronger feelings than understandings, grew very angry with the reception accorded to the Basha.

"Here," said they, "is the cruel representative of an oppressive and bloodthirsty despotism, under



which the poor Moorish people have groaned for ages. Why should we treat him with so much consideration, and flatter him, and generally cocker him up? Let us rather choose the occasion for showing him what we think of him and his Government."

It was no doubt true that the Basha was all that they called him, and worse; but if you choose the occasion when you have asked a man to your house to tell him what you think of him, you are accounted a very rude person. Therefore, to call the Sid' El Helba names while he was in this country, and had no sufficient means of answering back, was not very brave or pretty conduct. Yet that was what the foolish "Friends of Moorish Freedom" did.

And they went further in their folly. The Basha had come to London on a commercial mission, and the Lord Mayor, as representing the Commerce and the Corporation of the City, invited the Basha to a banquet at the Mansion House. That appeared to the absurdly sentimental "Friends of Moorish Freedom" so great an outrage on decency that they immediately invented a greater. They got up a counter-demonstration and a counter-banquet, to which they invited the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan.



Ali of Tetuan would have been well advised if he had not accepted the invitation. But he did accept it, and the acceptance marked a new departure in his history.

“Why,” he asked Dr. Neale, who tried to dissuade him, “why should I consider the Sid’ El Helba, the servant of a son of a slave who rules my poor country? Has he shown himself considerate to me, tender to mine? Who caused my brother and me to be put in the pit of serpents? El Helba! Well, these who ask me to go to the banquet which they have prepared are my good friends. They have been kind to me and they love my country, therefore I will go.”

And he went. But he did not return.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## ALI IS KIDNAPPED.

THE banquet to Ali was in the Savoy Hotel, and the faithful Dr. Dick, although he had failed to dissuade his cousin from attending it, accompanied him, to be his mouthpiece, if necessary, and, in any case, to do all he could to hinder too free a flow of opinion concerning the oppressions rampant in Morocco, and too generous an encouragement of the sacred cause of revolt. But, as the evening drew on, Dr. Dick found that he had imposed on himself a task that he could not accomplish.

My readers must know people who pride themselves on speaking out, on telling what they believe to be the truth always and in all circumstances, and they will agree with me that such persons often do more mischief than liars. There are mischievous politicians and public men of that sort who pride themselves on their absolute truth and honesty, but



who forget that, while there may be a time to speak, there is also a time to keep silent. Such were these worthy and wordy "Friends of Moorish Freedom." They were free citizens of a free country, and they insisted on using the utmost freedom of speech concerning the iniquities of the Government of the Sultan of Morocco, altogether oblivious how they were compromising the safety, and putting in jeopardy the life, of their distinguished guest.

"It is a disgrace to civilization," said one speaker, "that the Government of Great Britain should have any dealings with so shameful and iniquitous a despotism as that of Morocco, which is based on the extremest oppression and cruelty, on lust, slavery, perjury and corruption! Such a Government, which is no Government, is a perpetual outrage on the conscience of mankind, and we call upon all right-thinking, right-feeling persons to unite, to combine, to rest neither day nor night, until so detestable a tyranny is overthrown, and the downtrodden Moors raise to Heaven their faces wet with the tears of grateful freedom!"

A young poet, who knew nothing about Morocco except what he had heard from the gentlemen around him, but who had a store of fine feelings and fine words, recited an ode, in which he called



the Sid' El Helba an "Emissary of Hell," and the Sultan of Morocco "Assassin!" and "Enemy of Mankind!" while he hailed Prince Ali as "the Herald of the Coming Dawn!"

Dr. Dick groaned in spirit as he listened to all that foolish stuff, which was not exactly untrue, but which was so exaggerated, and which would have been so much better left unsaid just then. As for Prince Ali, he only half understood the speeches and this ode; but he had a simple, generous soul. He believed these people were his friends, and he stood up and thanked them at the last for their generous sentiments and their equally generous aid.

Thus the banquet came to an end, and the promoters of the banquet went home exceedingly well pleased with themselves. Dr. Dick and Prince Ali got their hats and overcoats, and moved together to the Embankment entrance of the Savoy Hotel. Dr. Dick was going to walk the short distance to his chambers in the Middle Temple, Ali was going to take a cab to the flat in Victoria-street.

"I fear, Cousin Ali," said Dick, in Moorish, when they had reached the pavement, "that trouble will come of this evening's entertainment. But I'll call in and see you to-morrow. Good night."

There was a bustle for cabs, and there were many



active touts around. Two decent looking fellows fastened themselves to Prince Ali.

"Cab, your honor? Cab, Prince? This way, sir! There's one 'ere, your Royal 'Ighness."

Dr. Dick heard them, and saw Ali go with them to a four-wheeled cab some distance back along the rank. He thought that all was well, and he went away.

But all was not well. The two touts pushed Ali into the cab, where he was immediately seized by two pairs of stout arms, and his mouth and nostrils were stopped by a damp, strong-smelling clout in a great, rough hand, while the door was banged to, and the cab was rapidly driven off. A rushing sea of thought swept over Ali's brain, and then a thick, heavy curtain fell between him and consciousness.

. . . . .

When the thick veil was lifted and he returned to consciousness, he found he was lying on his back with his arms bound to his sides. A small jet of gas burnt some distance from him, but it was sufficient to show that he was in a room and lying upon a small bed. Was he in prison, he wondered? But he was strangely drowsy and sick, and while he wondered, the curtain came down again and he lost touch with surroundings. Again



he returned to himself, and on looking around, he discovered that there was a window, the lower half of which was barred across. He staggered off the bed to look through it. He pressed his face against the bars and looked. He saw opposite to him the tops of buildings, with a gulf of space between. Plainly, then, wherever he was, he was very high up.

He turned about. There was a door, but it did not look like a prison door; it seemed too thin and slight. He kicked it, and it shivered.

"Holloa!" growled a rough voice without; and there sounded the flop of a heavy body. Bolts were shot back, the key was turned, and the door was opened. A heavy, brutal-looking fellow, with close-cropped head and thick neck, stood and stared at Ali.

"Now," said he, "what the Dickens-and-jerry-go-nimble d'yer mean by kicking this 'ere door? 'Tain't your door, is it? No; nor it ain't your wife. I've 'eard say that you forinors could give chaps like me p'int and a beating in keeping wives in order. Lots o' strap and no cheek, eh, guv'nor? That's about it, ain't it? But, as I made remark afore, this 'ere door ain't none o' yourn, and what I says is: 'What are ye blooming well a-doing of, eh?'"



"I wish to go out," said Ali.

"I dessay; and don't you wish you may get it? But ye can't. See, guv'nor? There's me and my mate"—indicating another bulky fellow outside—"has partic'lar orders—most partic'lar orders, we has—to 'old you tight and keep you quiet; and we're a-goin' to do it. Ain't we, Bill? Now, that being so," he continued, in a tone which was intended to convey a plausible and soothing argument, "don't you think the tip for you is to lie low and wait patient till the gaffer—the principal, as I may say—comes and 'as it out with you?"

Ali understood little of all that; but he guessed its purport to be that he could not be let out, and had better endure his captivity until someone in authority appeared. But what would Molly think of his long delay in returning to her? Would she not be frantic with anxiety?

"I have money," said he. "I will give you money. I must go out."

But the bold, bad Briton was not to be bribed. "Inky-dinky-darborough!" he murmured, laying his finger to the side of his nose, "don't you think it's a very fine day?"

When he said that, he deliberately closed the door, and locked and bolted it anew.



Prince Ali sat upon the bed and tried to consider his position. He was bewildered, and his senses were still drowsed with the anæsthetic which had overcome him. Moreover, he knew not where he was; therefore thought and speculation seemed vain. He could but work round and round, and find no issue.

But enlightenment came soon. He was still plunged in perplexity and speculation, when he heard new voices without. The brutal jailor with whom he had exchanged words opened the door, entered, and turned the gas up. And then, within the room, Ali saw a white-robed figure in a green turban. A second glance assured him that he looked upon the Sid' El Helba!

The Basha strode forward, while the two bullies remained in the background and kept the door. Prince Ali continued to sit on the bed and gaze at the Basha; and, as he gazed, an understanding of his desperate situation came to him, and with understanding came resentment. The goat-faced Basha gazed and smiled, and at length spoke—spoke in the Moorish speech.

“Thou reckless, vain, and babbling fool! At last I have caught thee nicely! Thou hast poured out all



thy desire and all thy ambition to those English friends of thine, with whom thou dost conspire to overthrow—the folly of it!—the power and authority of our lord the Sultan, the Commander of the Faithful, whom Allah preserve! I have caught thee; and I hold thee at my mercy, as a lion holds a silly ass!”

“Yes,” assented Ali; “thou hast caught me by a poor craft, oh, mine enemy! But thou must set me free again. Thou, and thy master the Sultan, have no power over me in this land.”

“And who, O Shereef, will deliver thee out of my hands? Will thy friends who conspire with thee come with swords and guns to thine aid? Poor fools, they are but made of wind! They talk, and talk, but they can do nothing!”

“Nay, Basha,” said Ali, confidently; “there is no need that I should ask their aid, nor the aid of swords and guns. The law of the English is strong enough. It is written therein that if thou hast aught against me, thou shouldst summon me to appear before a magistrate, a kadi, and declare before him what thou hast against me. I will appeal to the English Government; and the Government will say: ‘Set this man free. Thou, a stranger and a guest, hast no right of arrest.’ None but the law, not



even the Sultana herself, has right of arrest in this land. Therefore, Basha," continued Ali, in quiet confidence, "it will be wise to set me free before thy folly is made known to the Government, and thou, a stranger and guest, art covered with disgrace!"

"Dost thou take me," cried the Basha, with a laugh, "for such an one as thyself, who looks not before, and forgets, and forgets? How shalt thou make known thy case to the Government of the English? Canst thou call loud enough to be heard? Canst thou send a letter hence?" and he swept his hand round the bare room, and let his gesture linger to indicate the two burly and brutal jailors. "No; thou canst do nothing. I have thee, and I keep thee—keep thee till my return to our own land," he added, triumphantly, "and that will not be long delayed. Then thou goest with me, bound as a conspirator and traitor, and bound shalt thou be handed over to the tender mercies of thy outraged lord the Sultan!"

"I am neither blind nor a fool, Basha," said Ali, keeping himself well in, although bursting with resentment. "Thou playest a bold and desperate game; but I warn thee, it will fail. Of that I am confident. A wise woman has read me my fortune——"

"The wise woman whom thou hast taken to



wife?" smiled the Basha. "I know the wisdom of that woman."

"No," answered Ali, simply; "another—a sorceress. I shall accomplish the desire of my heart; and I shall be fully revenged on all my enemies. And of all my enemies there is but one a greater enemy than thou, Basha. And I will tell thee why, Basha, when Allah has put thy life into my hands."

In saying that, he rose and looked the Sid' El Helba in the face; and the Basha was obviously shaken by his proud confidence. He turned pale for an instant, and his eyes wavered to and fro.

"And did the witch," asked the Basha, "reveal to thee who all thy enemies were?"

"She revealed to me," answered Ali, "more than I have told thee."

That brought the Sid' El Helba's gaze back to the Prince's face; but he read nothing there.

"Allah," continued the Prince, solemnly, "holds the lives of all men in His hands, and He rules the world as He will; but He forgets not to bring punishment at the last to the oppressor, the betrayer, and the assassin. I live confident in the faith that Allah holds my life in reserve for an instrument of punishment."

He turned away, lay down upon the bed with his



back to the Basha, and said no more. And in a second or two the Sid' El Helba withdrew.

Now that Ali knew how he was situated, he was calm. He had the Moslem's faith, the Moslem's fatalism. He accepted what was inevitable for the time, and, since he saw no hope of release that night, he composed himself to sleep. He had slept he knew not how long, when he was waked, not by any sound that he knew of, but by a bright light in the room. He looked, and thought he must be dreaming. He had read the story of Peter the Apostle being wonderfully released from prison by an angel: there stood the angel before him all in white. He had also heard the story of Abou Ben Adhem, who "saw within the moonlight in his room, making it bright and like a lily in bloom, an angel": there was the angel, "like a lily in bloom."

"Hush!" said a voice that he knew. "Rise, and come!"

And then he knew the angel for Alula, the daughter of the Sid' El Helba, with a candle in her hand. And, in wondering silence, he rose from his bed, as quickly as he could with his arms bound. With a soft murmur of pity she noted his bonds. But she carried a dagger, and with it she cut the rope that bound him. Then, with her finger on her lip,



she led the way out. He glanced around, and saw his two guards heavily asleep on a pair of mats. So close was one of them to the door that Alula and Ali had to step over him to pass out.

She bolted the door, and locked it, and thrust the key into the bosom of the nearest guard. And then she led the way swiftly down the stairs.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE BEARDED LADY.

ALULA led and Ali followed down two flights of stairs, but no farther. She then passed swiftly along a landing and opened a door. Ali hesitated.

"But, Lalla Alula," he whispered, "am I not to go down into the street, and go home to my own house?"

"You mean to your wife's abode in the street of Victoria, sidi?" said Alula. "No, sidi. It is not possible at this hour. It is necessary that you accept my poor hospitality until the morning, at least. Haste! We may be seen."

She indicated the open door, and Ali passed in. He looked around him. He was in a sitting-room, and Alula's maid was there in waiting.

"Thou art in my part of my father's house," said Alula, in answer to Ali's looks of surprise and doubt. "Have no fear of being found. Neither my father, nor any of the slaves of the house, nor anyone save myself and this maid of mine, ever enters these



rooms. And now, if it please you, sidi, before you sleep we will talk."

"It will please me well, Alula," said he.

Yet he seemed troubled and anxious, for it was natural that, set thus midway between captivity and freedom, he should feel himself to be in a doubtful and equivocal situation.

"Ah, sidi!" broke out Alula, noting his troubled looks, "you know not how I would rather die than that a hair of your head should be touched."

He caught her impassioned gaze, and he noted her little hands clasped in her white lap.

"Dear Lalla," said he, "there is surely no question of dying?"

"Ah, sidi!" she cried again, "you look at me and you think of an English maiden. I wear the dress of an English maiden; but thou shouldst know well that only the dress is English. I am of thine own people, of thine own hot blood. My heart, like thine, sidi, is a smouldering fire!" He gave her a quick glance. "Do I not know thee?" she demanded. "Is not thy heart a fire trodden down? Have I not seen it blaze? Did I not see thee with thy brother in the pit of serpents and before? Allah, how beautiful ye were both!"

"Fair Lalla," said he, quietly, "we will not speak



of that time nor of my brother; it will unman me. Let us speak of now and of what is to be done. I have been brought hither violently and illegally by thy father. He has outraged the law and the Government of the English, and he must answer for what he has done."

"Sidi," said Alula, "my father knows full well what he has done. But he will run great risks to gain his purpose, and that is to commend himself to the high favor of the Sultan by bringing thee triumphantly out of the shadow of English protection, and handing thee over to the Sultan's own power. For knowest thou not that thou art now reported to be an obdurate and reckless rebel conspiring with certain English people to proclaim thine own greatness and to seize the Sultan's throne?"

"I am guilty of no such folly. All I seek is to fulfill my brother's desire for the good of his people, and to bring punishment on his murderers."

"But my father does not believe that, and thy friends among the English do not talk like that; and, remember, thou art held responsible for all their foolish talk."

"Well," said Ali, "it is well. That I must endure."



"But hast thou considered, sidi?" said Alula. "It is in thy thought, I know, that thou wilt return soon to our own land. But how, and how soon? Listen, sidi. Thou art released from my father's hold; but he is roused like a lion that has mouthed and yet has lost his prey. He will go to the English Government and tell his tale of the treasons thou dost hatch in this country, and the English Government, to be rid of the trouble, will command thee to leave this land at once. What then? Thou must hasten away publicly in one of their ships, and publicly thou wilt reach our own land, where the Sultan's people will be ready to lay hold of thee and carry thee to Fez or Marakesh into the clutches of him who will never let thee go."

"Thy words," said he, considering her with admiration, "are the words of a wise man and not of a young maiden."

She blushed with pleasure and continued: "I have a plan, sidi. My father has been bargaining to buy a ship that he might carry thee off in his own way, bound and in ignominy; but he haggles and will not give the price that is asked, and the ship is not yet bought. Now, go thou, sidi, at once and give the men that sell what they seek for the ship, and then sail away unknown to any and with-



out a word of leave-taking. Thou canst sail in the ship to what part of our own land thou wilt, and go on shore in secret and in safety, and so home to thine own castle and thine own people."

"Thy counsel is good, fair Alula," said the Prince, with excitement, "and I pray that I may kiss the hand of the counsellor." He did so, and then added: "To-morrow, when I go forth from here, I will do that very thing, when the Lalla Alula has told me where the ship is to be found."

Thereafter the Lalla Alula withdrew with her maid, and Ali was left to pass the rest of the night in her sitting-room.

In the chill October dawn they were all three afoot again. The maid was sent downstairs to spy if the way of flight was clear. She returned with alarm on her face. The Frenchman, De Courcel, was marching up and down the hall impatiently awaiting his coffee and roll. He was acting as one of the Basha's secretaries, but he did not live in the house. But having returned late with the Basha from the Mansion House Banquet, he had spent that night in the house; and being an early riser (like most Frenchmen), he was there by ill-luck to hinder the escape from the house of the Basha's prisoner. Ali was compelled to wait until the obstacle of his flight should remove himself.



Ere that relief came, however, there arose such a hubbub upstairs as declared only too plainly that the escape of the prisoner must have been discovered. In spite of the danger to himself then, Ali's concern was for his deliverer.

"I will stay here no longer," he declared. "If I am found in thy rooms, Alula, thou wilt be forever disgraced—by thy father and all!"

"Fear not," said she. "They will not seek thee here."

"It is for thee I fear," said he. "And I will not stay. May I not wear some clothes of thy maid and escape as a woman?"

He urged his point, and Alula yielded. The maid was tall, and a skirt, and cloak, and hat of hers—with a heavy black veil—made in Ali's view a sufficient disguise. Notwithstanding the danger, the maid could not contain her laughter as she helped to array the Prince in her own garments.

"Wait," pleaded Alula, 'until all have passed upstairs to see what is the matter.'

"Not a second longer, my Lalla," said Ali.

He kissed her hand, urged the maid to haste—for she was to show him out of the house—and followed her to the stairs. The maid tripped down them; he took them three at a time, so that he



reached the entrance-hall considerably in advance of her. He laid hands on the hall-door, but he could not undo it. And while he lingered, forth came the Frenchman from the dining-room with two of the Basha's Moorish staff, to know what the hubbub above-stairs was about. De Courcel was about to bound upstairs when he caught sight of the veiled woman. He paused and eyed her curiously, and the maid now arrived to let her out.

"Well, good-morning, Mrs. Brown," said the self-possessed and smiling British maid as she held open the door. There was no danger in all this for her.

"Good-morning," mumbled the strange Mrs. Brown, striding down the steps.

De Courcel shot a swift glance after her. The maid at once closed the door and stood a moment looking at him.

"My dear," said he, lightly tapping her hand with his forefinger as he spoke, "I think Mrs. Brown has a beard!"

"And if she has," responded the pert maid, "it's not your beard, sir, I suppose?"

"All right, my dear," said he.

When he heard presently of the escape of the



Basha's prisoner, he had no doubt who Mrs. Brown was. And later, when he found that the two ruffians on duty at Prince Ali's door had gone soundly to sleep the night before after drinking a can of beer brought to them by a maid, he made certain that Ali had been then released, and must have passed the rest of the night in Alula's private quarters. But he said not a word to the Basha. He only grinned in solitude and rubbed his hands over and over to think of the use he might make of his knowledge elsewhere. The opportunity came sooner than he had anticipated.

As Alula had foretold, the Basha, when he knew his prisoner was gone, became like an old lion that has mouthed a quarry and lost it. He raged up and down in futile fury, and filled the house with terror. He was thus raging to and fro in the drawing-room, while his two Moorish secretaries squatted on rugs mute and terrified, when De Courcel came and announced to him that the Princess Ali desired an audience.

"Let her enter," he cried, waving his hand and standing in the middle of the room.

Molly entered, looking troubled but resolute.

"What seekest thou?" demanded the old barbarian. "A price for the surrender of thy lord?"



Molly turned pale, lividly pale, as if she had been slapped in the face. Her eyes flashed, but she contained herself.

"I seek my husband," she answered, firmly. "I fear that evil may have befallen him, and I come to the representative of the Sultan to inquire if he knows aught of Prince Ali of Tetuan."

"Hear the woman!" he exclaimed, rolling his eyes round upon his secretaries. "Am I the keeper of Prince Ali of Tetuan? Would I were! He would now be secure!" And he thrust out his hands, grasped an imaginary body, and shook it with hearty violence. "But thou art his keeper!" he cried, suddenly. "And this I tell thee, woman: that I go this very day to the keeper of your Sultana's foreign keys to demand the arrest for me of Ali of Tetuan."

"Thinkest thou, Basha," she asked, with a smile, "that the Foreign Minister will arrest Ali and surrender him to thee? He will talk to thee pleasantly, but he will not arrest or surrender him. He dare not; the law of this land forbids him."

"He must! He shall! By the beard of the Prophet he shall!" yelled the Basha, swinging his arms and beating his hands together. "Ali of Tetuan is proved to be planning desperate treasons



against my lord and master, the Sultan of the Moors, the Commander of the Faithfull, whom Allah preserve! And if he is not surrendered to me, then I tear up all my business with the Government of the English, I shake the dust of this land off my feet, and I return straightway to my own land, and cause such a slaughter and destruction of the English in Morocco as will make this Government tremble!"

"That might cost you dear!" said Molly to herself; but she looked serious and was silent, because the eye of De Courcel was on her.

The Basha turned his back; and Molly understood her audience was at an end. As he heard her withdraw, he swung about again.

"Ali of Tetuan is worth half the price of his brother!" he cried. "Wilt thou earn the price?"

"Beast!" hissed Molly, through her clenched teeth. But she did not turn. Rage boiled in her heart; but she could answer nothing—had she not earned the insult?

She scarce noted that De Courcel ushered her out of the Basha's presence, until, when the door was closed, he passed swiftly to another door which he opened, inviting her to enter.

"If *Madame la Princesse*," said he, "will have the



goodness, I desire a word with her—for her advantage. It is about her husband," he added, when she stood in hesitation. Then she walked in at the open door, and he closed it.

"Well?" said she, with dislike and defiance in tone and feature.

"Your husband, the Prince, madame—but you will promise to keep to yourself what I say?"

"I promise," said she, hastily. "Go on."

"Your husband, the Prince, madame, was captured last night by agents of the Basha on his leaving the banquet at the Savoy, and was brought here and locked up, to be carried off to Morocco presently."

"Then he is in this house?"

"He was, madame, but he escaped from it this morning. That is why his Excellency the Basha is so enraged."

"Where, then, is he? I have not seen him."

De Courcel shrugged a shoulder. "I know not; but I think it possible he may be with his friend, the doctor. For he is truly in great danger with the Basha and with the English Government: the Basha may take him again, and the Government will certainly tell him to go away at once. If he goes away publicly, then it is as if he walked into



the lion's mouth. His friends—'The Friends of Moorish Freedom'—have much money. Can they better expend it than in hiring a private ship—a yacht—to take him secretly back to his own land?"

"Why, may I ask, sir, have you given yourself the trouble to tell me these things?"

"Madame!" said De Courcel, in a voice of reproach, "do I not continue, in spite of all, to adore the most beautiful woman in the world?"

She looked at him, but she said nothing.

"There is one thing more, madame, which I had almost forgotten," said he; and he went very near to her in saying it. "The person who contrived the release of the Prince was the girl Alula. She released him last night: he left the house this morning as a veiled lady. He spent the interval in the apartments of Alula."

Molly's eyes flashed. She was exasperated beyond bearing. The Frenchman's face was bending near her. She slapped it with a force which stung her own fingers, found the handle of the door, and walked out.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## DE COURCEL AGAIN.

ON leaving the Basha's house, Molly took a cab to Dr. Neale's chambers in the Temple. As De Courcel had suspected, she found Prince Ali there, but not the doctor; he was gone to inform her of Ali's safety. At sight of her husband, Molly was overcome. She threw herself into his arms, and gave way to a wild fit of sobbing and endearment; for Molly had discovered that she passionately loved the man she had married, and through that discovery she was beginning to experience punishment for her past.

"Oh, my dear, my dear!" she cried, between the sobs. "Oh, thank God you are safe—safe—safe! But you must not stay in this country any longer! We must go away—away!"

He caressed and sought to soothe her. "Yes, dear one," he said, "I know. We will go away to my own dear land of sunshine, and fulfill the destiny



which Allah has written down for us in His book of life." She shivered. "Tremble not, dear one," he went on. "We will prepare to go at once."

Then he sat down with her and told her all that had happened, and all that Alula had said about her father's plans; he omitted to say he had been taken after his release to Alula's apartments—for why should he run the risk of misunderstanding and jealousy? He merely said he had spent the night in "another part of the house." And Molly had the good sense and generosity neither to question nor to suspect him. She told of her own visit to the Basha, but said nothing of her interview with De Courcel; and she proposed application to "The Friends of Moorish Freedom" (thinking it a wise step) without declaring who had suggested it.

When the doctor returned, the whole matter was discussed with him. He agreed with the suggestion of a private yacht, and agreed also with the suggestion of appeal to the committee of "The Friends of Moorish Freedom."

"But," said he, "I think that we should only borrow the money of them for hiring and fitting the yacht; Ali will repay it when he can lay hand on the revenues owing to him."

"Certainly," said both Ali and his wife.



"Then," said the doctor, with alacrity, "I'll set about the business at once. And Ali had better stay here and not go out; this place is better guarded and is more difficult to get at than your flat."

The doctor went to the secretary of "The Friends of Moorish Freedom," and it was an odd coincidence—as the secretary told him—that a steam yacht had already been offered for sale or hire: a Frenchman had come to the office, saying he had heard privately that they might need a boat for some secret service. It was another coincidence—but one which did not catch the attention of the doctor, because he did not know it—that the yacht bore the same name as the one which Alula said her father had been haggling over.

When Molly, however, knew of the coincidences, and added to them her own—the mention of a private yacht by De Courcel also—she was troubled. The coincidences were undeniably ominous; but they were explained away in an altogether unexpected fashion.

Ali had been in hiding with a friend of Dr. Neale's in another part of the Temple; and it had been settled between Molly and her husband and the doctor, that in case her movements should be



watched, she should cease to visit him until all was ready for the final removal. Therefore, she sat in her elegant drawing-room after dinner, alone and sad, troubled but resolute. She was wondering whether she might not as well go to bed, when the maid opened the door and announced a visitor.

"Captain De Courcel!" said she.

Molly bounded to her feet. "You!" she exclaimed, facing him where he stood, bowing low, in the middle of the room.

"Yes, madame," said he; "it is I. You permit yourself to be surprised that I come, after you lay hand on me unkindly. But, madame, I bear no malice; and I assure you, upon my soul and conscience, that I wish to serve you and your husband."

She stood silent, and looked at him. She wondered what could be the purpose of that bold and subtle schemer in visiting her thus—especially after her treatment of him in the morning. He must know, or at least guess, that her husband was not there. He noted the play of thought upon her countenance.

"You permit me to sit down?" he asked.

"Sit down," said she.

And they sat.

"I have decided," said he, "that I will come to



you in confidence, pure and simple." She smiled with incredulity. "But, yes!" he asseverated. "I cannot forget that I have adored you! *Mon Dieu*, what adoration!"

"I think, sir," said Molly, "you had better leave your adoration out of account, and tell me what you want of me. You want something, of course."

"Why, madame," he asked, in reproach, "do you always think me mercenary? Madame is now the wife of Ali, the Prince of Tetuan; but she will lie upon a bed of thorns if his safety and his position are not made secure; and, I assure you most solemnly, madame—upon my soul and conscience!—I who know all the Basha El Helba's plans, that your husband's life and position are not worth a sou—if he does not become French, if he does not put himself under the protection of France!"

Molly understood enough of the condition of Morocco to take that statement seriously. And it is necessary that my readers should carefully note what I am about to set down, in order that they, also, may completely comprehend the progress of events. For many years Morocco, like Turkey, has been kept from going to pieces only by the watchful rivalries of the Powers of Europe—of England, France, Spain, and Italy, in particular. England



does not wish to possess Morocco—her hands are full of possessions already—but she cannot afford to see another, and a probably hostile, European Power take it, because Morocco commands the entrance to the Mediterranean, and a strong Power installed there could cancel the value of Gibraltar and shut the Mediterranean up. Look at a map, and you will see how true that is. France, on the other hand, has long been determined to add Morocco to her other North African dominions; but she dare not seize it openly, because she would be at once opposed by the other Powers. To gain her purpose, therefore, she steadily works by all manner of subtle and underhand means; and she is well placed for bringing these to bear, by possessing the Colony of Algeria, which is next door to Morocco. One of the means which she constantly works is the enrolling of Moorish subjects as *protégés*, “protected” by France. The Government of the Moors is so bad that there is little security for life or property; and therefore, whenever a Moor makes money, he either hides it or becomes a “protected” subject of a European Power—of France, by preference, because she is always touting for subjects. Thus, France appears to the intelligent native to be the strongest and most active of all the



Powers; and she believes that, when the crumbling Moorish power is finally pushed over into the dust, she can march in from Algeria, and be in a position of great advantage by the aid of those whom she has "protected."

These things Molly understood pretty well, and she seriously pondered what the Frenchman said.

"I know," said she, "that the situation of Prince Ali is very dangerous; but, if the worst comes, it is only natural that he should seek the protection of England, since he is half-English."

"The protection of England!" cried the Frenchman. "Madame, you have been with the Moors, and you should know that England will not put her protection over him. If he seek her protection, she will say: 'No. Be a good boy; keep your allegiance to the Sultan, and help, with your great influence, to prop up his throne against the insidious attacks of La Belle France!' That is what England would say to him; and then he would find himself in the claws of the Sultan, stripped of all—of money, estates, influence, life! Me, I say it, because me, I know it! I have all the plans of the Basha and the Sultan at the end of my fingers!"

Molly was impressed. She was filled with alarm and doubt.



"But," said she, "there are 'The Friends of Moorish Freedom!'"

"Pif!" said he. "Of their own selves they will do nothing but talk and talk! They will preach the Rights of Man to the Government of Morocco—and that is all. Better to preach to wild beasts! The Sultan and his Ministers, and all the Moors in Morocco, know not any right of man, except to get as much as he can of whatever he wants! And me, I know not any other right of man! But I am a patriot, and I wish to get for La Belle France what I can. I wish to get the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan for France. I wish it for the good motive. Under the protection of France, the Prince will be safe and strong; and France will have an illustrious subject. You understand, madame?"

"It would be better, would it not," said Molly, "to make those representations to Prince Ali himself?"

"I have made them," said he; "and he saw how just and advantageous they were—until he came under the influence of madame. Now——"

"I understand," said she. "You wish me to persuade him to become a subject of France?"

"Madame rightly divines my desire."

"I am not yet convinced that it would not be better



for him to seek the protection of England; and I think that if it were properly asked for, it would be truly given."

"Madame," said he, "in confidence, why should I not trust you entirely? I tell you another thing to show you how ready I am, how ready France is, to help your illustrious husband. It is I who have secretly caused offer to be made of the yacht to 'The Friends of Moorish Freedom,' that the Prince may escape immediately. Me, I have done that; for the yacht was in my hands!"

"That," said she, "may be a doubtful recommendation of the yacht."

"Madame," said he, more urgently and earnestly, "let us not recriminate. I will do more still." He dived his hand into his inner pocket. "See you that, madame?" said he, displaying a small parchment inscribed with Arabic characters.

She could not help eagerly leaning forward and gazing. She recognized her own signature, "MARY NEALE." She turned deathly pale, and heaved a great sigh.

"Dear madame," said De Courcel, earnestly, "all the past shall be forgotten—blotted, wiped out—and this shall disappear in the flames of that fire if you will promise to prevail on Prince Ali to give his hand to France!"



She gazed at him, and gazed at the parchment. He made no allusion to the copy which had been addressed to Prince Ali, and which he did not know but that the Prince had received; and Molly made no allusion to it, for she believed it was irretrievably lost. She opened her mouth to speak, and he moved towards the fire, with the parchment displayed, to encourage her—when they heard the door open. They both turned—and there, before them, stood Prince Ali!



## CHAPTER XIX.

## ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

MOLLY closed her eyes for a second as if her head swam. But there was no time for fainting or hesitation; the situation must be dealt with at once.

"Is it you, my dear?" she cried, starting to her feet, and stepping eagerly towards her husband.

As she rose she cast a swift glance upon De Courcel. The Frenchman, doubtless, took that for an acceptance of his proposals. While she greeted her husband, he turned and went without hurry to the fire and laid the parchment—at any rate, *a* parchment—on the glowing coals. Ali saw that done with an eye that takes in an act without considering it. Molly turned and led him forward, her arm in his. She also then saw the parchment curl and break into flame, and then, with relief at her heart, she spoke.

"Captain De Courcel," said she, "has come to tell me that he saw you escape this morning as a veiled



lady. He thought I might not know, and," she added, with a plausible touch of doubt, "he wishes me to believe that he is your friend."

"But yes, my Prince," said the Frenchman, promptly, in English. "And I have just shown to madame a note from the Ambassador of France in London"—pointing to the fire—"in which he declares that he sees no safety for you, my Prince, save in the protection of France." It was unfortunate for his statement that the burnt parchment rose up transparent on the glow of the fire and showed plainly that it was not written in European characters. "You know, my Prince," continued De Courcel, "that, although I serve the Basha El Helba, my heart is for France. I have always said so."

"Yes," assented Prince Ali, "you have said so. But I need no protection save the hand of Allah."

He turned again to Molly, and De Courcel, who was quite aware of the proprieties of social intercourse, felt that he was dismissed.

"*Adieu, mon Prince,*" said he. "We may soon meet again in your own land. *Adieu, Princesse,*" he added, giving Molly a quick glance which plainly signified "Remember!"

The Prince politely conducted him to the door. When he returned there was no trace of the flimsy,



transparent ash of the parchment. But Ali did not seem to note that. He clasped his wife close in his arms.

"Dearest one," he broke out, "I have come to you because by to-morrow's dawn we must be on the ship."

"So very soon?" said she. In swift thought she considered that, by immediate flight, her husband would escape trouble both with the Basha and with the British Government, and she herself would be rid of the very doubtful attentions of the Frenchman. Not for a moment did she suspect then that the departure of the Prince was being hastened by De Courcel himself. She answered with alacrity: "I must get ready, then. I must go and pack at once."

"The doctor also packs," said the Prince. "He goes with us."

Molly welcomed that announcement, for she both liked and trusted Dr. Dick.

Molly was an experienced traveller and an expert packer. She did not need to hesitate over what she should take with her, and what she should leave behind. She took a great deal, but she also was compelled to leave much, of which she put her confidential maid in charge, until that could be undertaken by her solicitor, to whom she wrote a letter. She



wrote to her banker also, for Molly had still a considerable sum lying at interest, desiring him to send her a letter of credit to Gibraltar.

She did not go to bed all that night, and by five in the morning she was ready. Prince Ali, when he saw the array of trunks and cases, admired and praised her expedition. Cabs were sent for (one cab could never have carried all the baggage), hot coffee was drunk, and long before six they were out in the chill October air. Molly stopped at the first pillar-box to post her letters with her own hand, then they drove on to the Embankment gate of the Middle Temple, where Dr. Dick was waiting to meet them. At the Temple Stairs on the river there was an electric launch ready. In a little while they were shooting, they and all their baggage, with the ebb-tide down to London Bridge. They passed beyond the bridge, and drew alongside a steam yacht of considerable size, but of slim and elegant proportions. On one of the life-buoys which hung over the bulwarks Ali read "The Star of the South." It was the name mentioned to him by Alula, the name of the yacht for which her father had been bargaining.

When the red October sun rose over the scummy, oleaginous waters of the Thames, the Star of the South was voyaging swiftly towards the face of the



morning, in the company of vessels both larger and smaller than herself, outward-bound with the tide. Then the three travellers slackened their care and prepared to go to their cabins to sleep. At that moment Dr. Dick laid a detaining hand on Ali and gave him a letter.

“It came for you last night,” said he.

Ali looked at the superscription in wonder. It was written in the round, elementary hand of a young schoolgirl, a girlish hand with much of a boy’s fullness and force. He opened it and read:

“I wish I could write to you in our own language. But I cannot yet, so I write this English. May Allah keep you safe till you reach our own dear land, and also keep you safe there! I am very sad. My father is still breathing out threatenings of death to you; but I know I shall see you again.—ALULA.”

He considered the words for some moments, glanced after Molly who had gone down the cabin stairs, and then crumpled up the letter to throw it overboard. He repented of that, however, smoothed it out, folded it, and put it in his pocket.

The doctor did not sleep long. He loved the sea. He was a good sailor, and by eleven o’clock he pre-



pared to take a look around the ship which had been so quickly got ready for Ali's need. He opened the lockers in his cabin, and was somewhat surprised to find them filled with packets of cartridges. He made a thorough examination of the cabin, and in the long lockers under the two seats he found rifles packed. Surprise changed to suspicion. He visited the saloon. In the lockers there, under the upholstered divans, more rifles. Suspicion grew. He went to the skipper, who was English, as were all the crew. He inquired of the skipper the meaning of what he had seen.

"Oh, yes," said the skipper, "that's some of them. There's more in the hold, cases of rifles and ammunition both. Dry goods, we call 'em in the invoice. You don't mean to say, sir, you didn't know?" he exclaimed, on noting the doctor's look of amazement. "They came aboard last night for your party. Mossoo Demange, he's the steward and purser, he brought 'em."

M. Demange, steward and purser, was summoned. He was evidently a Frenchman. Oh, yes, it was quite right, he said. The society—"The Friends of Moorish Freedom"—had sent them for the Prince. Did not mister the doctor know? The doctor remembered hearing from the secretary of the society



that it was a Frenchman who had called to make offer of the yacht.

"Are you," he demanded, "the person who went to the office of the society and offered this yacht for sale or hire?"

The Frenchman seemed a little put out. He shrugged a shoulder and spread out a hand.

"Answer me," said mister the doctor.

"But, yes," said Demange, "I am the man."

"And you know that the Basha El Helba was also in treaty for it?"

"But, yes, sir," said Demange. "It is true."

"Who was in treaty on behalf of the Basha?" demanded the doctor.

"Ah, but, certainly mister the doctor knows him. It was Captain De Courcel."

Then a new suspicion flashed upon the doctor.

"It was Captain De Courcel who sent you to the society?"

"Mister the doctor is right," reluctantly assented the man.

Thereupon leaped up another suspicion. "Captain De Courcel also sent these cases of rifles and ammunition on board?"

"Mister the doctor," said the man, sulkily, "has a corkscrew for a tongue. He has opened the bottle



and well-nigh emptied it; he may as well have the dregs. The rifles and ammunition were first bought for the Basha; they are now for the Prince Ali. Wherefore? I do not know. It is not my affair."

But the doctor thought he knew. And he was all the more troubled that it seemed plain that De Courcel, in leaving a stupid person like Demange on board, did not care who knew, once Ali was on the way to Morocco in company with that dangerous and compromising cargo.

He laid his discovery and suspicions before the Prince and Princess Ali as soon as they appeared.

"It is very evident," said he, "that De Courcel hopes either one or other of two things: either that you will be discovered landing arms and ammunition in Morocco, and so of provoking rebellion and civil war, or that the Basha may be able to accuse you of stealing these things from him—that is to say, from the Sultan and Government of Morocco. But why does he take all this trouble? What is really his game, I wonder?"

"I know," said Molly. "He wishes to push Ali into the arms of France. He said as much to me—he said as much to us both—last night."

Ali assented to that view. The doctor then suggested that the simplest way of being rid of the diffi-



culty would be to heave both guns and ammunition overboard. But Ali—having strong in him the love of weapons, and the delight of possessing them, which mark all semi-barbarians—would not hear of such scandalous waste.

“Well,” said the doctor, “we shall have trouble yet.”

Ali pointed out that they were voyaging in secret, and there was very little likelihood of being discovered landing at the lonely spot they were making for. Still the doctor shook his head, and declared he did not like it. But no more was said.

They had good weather, and they made a quick run south. On the fifth day they were in the Straits of Gibraltar; and Ali was stirred to an extraordinary pitch of excitement to see again the towering mountains of his native land, flushed with the beauty of a rosy dawn. They avoided the fortress of Gibraltar, and kept away to starboard to hug the African shore. They became wary, and hung tarpaulins over the bows, and a flag over the stern to hide the name of the ship. They passed the Spanish town and fortress of Ceuta in the early morning, and kept to the southeast.

Their intention was to land some seventy miles along that curving, iron-bound coast, at a sheltered



spot between the Fishers' Isles and the shore, and some distance to the west of the Spanish convict settlement of Peñon de Velez. They were steaming in when a big ship stood out from behind one of the islets, with the evident intention of driving them in.

Glasses were brought to bear; and then it was plain that the agents of the Moorish Government were on the look-out for them. The vessel was a warship—the Sid'-El-Turki—one of the two ships of war which compose the modern Moorish navy, and they stood away out to sea again to escape her.



## CHAPTER XX.

## IN THE EMBRACE OF FRANCE.

THE Sid'-El-Turki put on more steam to keep outside of the Star of the South, in order to jam her in and make her run ashore; and the Star of the South put on more steam, to avoid such a fate, and to escape from the Sid'-El-Turki. The English yacht ran up the Union Jack; the Moorish warship showed no flag at all, but fired a threatening gun. Not a blank charge—the barbarian Moors did not trouble themselves with such civilized preliminary politeness—but a good, old-fashioned round shot, which flew over the main-top of the Star of the South and plunged into the sea. It was not soothing to the nerves of those who were on board the Star of the South to know thus that they were within easy range of the Sid'-El-Turki's guns. The war spirit of Ali was roused, and he wished to turn and fight the warship, even with the pair of signalling guns on board. But when he was told that, although there was powder,



there was neither shot nor shell, he saw there was nothing to do but to support the captain's prudent resolve to flee. The captain, moreover explained that, when put to her pace, the yacht could easily show "a clean pair of heels" to a craft like the Moorish warship. And presently she made good his word, and drew away from the Sid'-El-Turki, dragging behind her a great white wake spread out like a fan.

But before they could throw off fear of the pursuit of the Moorish ship, an unlucky incident occurred. A shot from the Sid'-El-Turki—the gunners had fired several and had found their range—hit the Star of the South on the port-beam and just above the water-line. Had that shot been a shell, there would probably have been an end of the yacht. As it was, one of the steel-plates that composed the yacht's frail shell was stove in, and the danger of her sinking was only obviated by slinging overboard a mattress to stop the hole.

By that time the great headland of Tres Forcas was in sight. To land anywhere on the near side of that cape was impossible, with the Moorish warship still in pursuit; and if it were once rounded, the skipper declared to the doctor and Ali that he saw nothing for it but to run for the port of Oran in Algeria.



"And then," said the doctor, "we shall have trouble with the French. We don't want to land on French soil if we can help it."

"But we can't help it," said the skipper. "We must round that blessed head, and if we do that—and we *must*—then we must run on to Oran. There's Melilla round the corner, but that's Spanish, and Spanish would be worse for you than French. Besides, at Oran we can get our damage repaired, and then run back in the night and land at the spot we first arranged for."

"We are being driven against our will," said Molly, when that was told her, "into the arms of France!"

There was gloom in her tone; and through her senses a shuddering foreboding that Fate had turned against her.

After they rounded the headland of Tres Forcas they saw nothing of the Sid'-El-Turki, and in the night they entered the Bay of Oran. At daybreak their arrival was known to the harbor authorities. The yacht flew the British flag, yet it was distinguished in the early hours of the morning by a visit from the Governor of Oran himself; the reason of which soon became apparent. He came in no mood of suspicion or of authority, but with



the politeness of a French gentleman and the affability of an official representative of the greatness and the hospitality of France. He astonished them by singling out Ali at once for his attentions, and by addressing him as "your Excellency" and "*mon Prince*." The surprise of Ali and his company was manifest.

"Ah, my Prince," said the Governor, with a smile, "you wonder that I know you? It is not possible, sir, to mistake the distinguished countenance of the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan." And he displayed a Paris illustrated paper, in which was a full-page portrait of Ali; it was plainly copied from a photograph taken in London. "Moreover," he added, to their further astonishment, "I received a message from Paris that I should be on the *qui vive* for a visit from your Excellency. I was warned that the accidents of the sea might drive your Excellency to the hospitable door of France."

"You were warned by telegraph, I suppose, sir?" said the doctor.

"Yes, sir," answered the Governor; "by telegraph."

"France," said the doctor, "seems to take a very great interest in the person and the movements of Prince Ali."



“France, sir,” responded the Governor, “is interested—deeply, to the heart!—in the history and the fate of a Prince so unfortunate, so persecuted, and so noble! France, sir, is prepared to spend blood and treasure in support of a Prince so just and so distinguished! It is the glory of France, sir, that she ever takes to her sympathetic bosom the unfortunates of the universe!”

“From Satan downward,” murmured the doctor, aside.

“She has a mission of civilization in the world; and she intends to perform it!” said the Governor.

The Governor alternated between Moorish and French, addressing the one to Ali and the other to the doctor; and thus it happened that Ali heard without understanding the last magnificent sentiments.

“My lord the Governor,” said Ali, speaking with dignity and affability in his own tongue, “is as generous as the sun, and his words attest the greatness of his soul. Accident has driven us hither to the hospitable harbor of France to repair our damage; and I am grateful for the accident, because it has brought me face to face with my lord the Governor.” The speech was polite enough, and florid enough to please the Governor, and then, in an outburst of well-calculated generosity, he put him-



self, his house, and all that he had at the disposal of the Prince, the Princess, and their friends, and insisted almost on their taking possession at once. When his very generous offer was declined, he invited them to dinner, and would take no excuse nor denial.

"It is evident," said Molly, when he had gone, "that France is determined to claw Ali to her bosom."

"Yes," assented the doctor. "She is like the philanthropist who said, 'Confound your soul and body, come to me and be blessed!' Now, who set that Moorish ship on the look-out for us—she evidently was on the look-out—and who warned this Governor that we might turn up here? I wonder if you will agree with me as to the answer?"

"It is not a very hard riddle," answered Molly, somewhat reluctantly. "De Courcel."

"Well," said Ali, to dismiss the matter, "we will go to his dinner, and we will come back; and then we shall see no more of him."

But that was too sanguine a hope, scarcely justified by the evidence of the trouble which had been taken to drive Ali to Oran. The Governor was not to be shaken off, and it seemed evident that he had taken means to detain them. The repair of the



breach in the vessel's side might have been effected in a few hours—in a day at the most; but it was delayed and spun out for day after day, doubtless by order. And the Governor's purpose in hindering the repair of the yacht, although unconfessed, became manifest. By argument and importunity he was resolved to make a French citizen of Ali before he let go his hold of him; and had it not been for the counter-persuasions of the doctor and Molly, it is likely that he would have prevailed with the Grand Shereef. For Ali had not forgotten the prophecy of the sorceress, Miss Cameron, that he would be finally established only by the protecting influence of a great foreign power. That power might very well be France, who was so eager to adopt him as a son. It might also be England, as Molly and the doctor urged; and so the Governor's eloquent arguments and importunities were of little effect.

But a crisis came. The Prince and Princess and the doctor were again at dinner in the Government House. After dinner the Governor manœuvred to lead Molly out upon a balcony overlooking the bay. The night was beautiful and balmy, and a young moon, newly risen above the hills behind the town, flooded the bay and turned the blue waters of the Mediterranean to quivering, molten silver. There



was an unusual bustle down by the shore, for the steamer from Marseilles had just come in. It was on the pretence of being refreshed with the beauty of the scene that the Governor led Molly out upon the balcony, although her woman's quick sense divined he had another motive. Her instinct was right.

"Madame," said the Governor, after some polite and sentimental nothings, "I desire to speak seriously—very seriously. Why does madame oppose all my efforts to persuade the Grand Shereef to become a *protégé* of France?"

"Do I, indeed, oppose your efforts, sir?" said Molly, carelessly. "How very wicked and foolish of me!"

"Let us be serious, madame."

"I am as serious as I can be, sir," said Molly. "But how can a mere woman hinder the Governor of Oran, the representative of powerful and glorious France—how can she hinder him from attaining his desire?"

"Madame," said the Governor, "I am not ignorant of your history; and I know that you have the mind and the resolution of a man, and the finesse of a diplomatist. Why do you refuse to see that the greatness of your husband—but even his safety—



depends upon his accepting the protection of France? You are ambitious, madame. You are fitted to adorn a great position, but a magnificent position. You are fitted for a throne, and a throne might be yours—by the help of France.”

“Sir,” broke out Molly, “I may be ambitious, but,” she cried, as with a wail of protest, “I love my husband! I value his safety, his freedom, and his dignity above all things.”

“Above all things, madame?” queried the Governor, softly, with a thin smile.

“Frankly,” she continued, with strong feeling, “I do not trust France. If France aided the Grand Shereef against the Sultan and established him on the throne of Morocco in the Sultan’s place, it would be that she might afterwards make him her slave. What has happened in recent years in Tunis? Do not all men know that France first urged her protection upon the Bey, and then made him her creature, her prisoner, a king of straw—without power, without liberty, almost without life?”

The Governor was for a moment set back with that indictment. Then he spoke in a low, but incisive tone, and his first words went to Molly’s heart like a musket-shot.

“Madame, then, is false to her promise—her promise to Captain De Courcel!”



"Promise?" murmured Molly. "To De Courcel? I gave no promise to Captain De Courcel!"

The Governor leaned over the balcony. A man was walking up to the house from the roadway, followed by a lightly-clad Arab porter with luggage.

"Ah! Is it you, *mon ami*?" called down the Governor.

"It is I, your Excellency," answered a voice which Molly recognized. The recognition made her well-nigh faint with astonishment and alarm.

"Come here at once," said the Governor. "You know the way."

In a second or two De Courcel joined them. Molly guessed that he had just arrived by the steamer from Marseilles, but she expressed neither surprise nor welcome.

"*Ah, Madame la Princesse, it is you!*" he exclaimed. But Molly said no word.

"Madame swears," said the Governor, as if De Courcel had merely come from the adjoining room, and would at once understand what had been the subject of his talk with Molly, "madame swears that she never gave you her promise to prevail on the Prince."

"What?" said De Courcel, brusquely. "Madame forgets that I performed her a service—but an extraordinary service—on that condition!"



"I gave no promise!" said Molly, standing erect and speaking with decision.

De Courcel and the Governor talked together in quick, low tones, and Molly's heart beat wildly and desperately.

"*Bien!*" said De Courcel, twisting round on his heels in military fashion. "This is what we have to say, madame, and it is to you that we say it: To-morrow the Grand Shereef accepts the protection of France, or we arrest him and send him as a rebel to the Sultan of Morocco!"

They bowed to her. She turned and walked in. On the threshold of the door she paused and faced them again with fierce resolution:

"Spies! Traitors! Canaille! I defy you!"



## CHAPTER XXI.

## AMONG THE WILD MEN OF THE MOUNTAINS.

PUNISHMENT was overtaking Molly for her great offence, and she felt that it was. It was bitter—bitter!—to know that, but for the dark and shameful deed which she had done in Fez, these two French schemers would not have dared to propose to her that she should betray her husband and his future, and that, but for De Courcel's hold on her secret, he would not have ventured to present her with an ultimatum. She rebelled furiously. She would not yield to their threats. She would deliver her husband from the danger of which he was ignorant; as to that she was resolved.

When she was again on board the yacht she sought out the skipper, and had a private word with him; and then she and the skipper together had a private word with the engineer. Presently a sound pervaded the ship, as of a thousand rats gnawing at hard wood. By good luck the iron plate which the



French workmen of Oran had prepared to replace the damaged steel one was on board, and the engineer and his subordinates were busy drilling holes in it and in the vessel's side, so that the plate might be temporarily fixed in its place with screw bolts. Ali and the doctor listened and wondered what the noise could mean, and the skipper came voluntarily to explain.

"It's not for nothing," said he, with indignation, "that them mossoos have been messing us about for days. They knew what they were about. I've heard to-night that they were going to seize the yacht to-morrow, and we're tinkering up to cut away to sea as soon as the moon goes down."

Ali and the doctor said little, but they commended the prudence and the propriety of the skipper's resolve, whether his fear was justified or not.

When the moon went down and real darkness supervened, the *Star of the South* slipped out of the Bay of Oran and steamed westward slowly, because she was rudely patched, and because she had been lightened of much of her ballast to raise the breach in her side out of the water. But her navigators succeeded in their purpose, and in the dark of the following night the yacht crept in to the secret anchorage which she had been seeking



when the Moorish warship had come down upon her.

The Star of the South had been finally successful in her mission; she had brought the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan back to his native land, to the verge of his own domain, to the threshold of his home. In the grey light that precedes the dawn, a boat was rowed ashore with three passengers wrapped in Moorish dress: Ali, Molly, and the doctor had transformed their appearance before setting foot on Moorish soil. As the keel of the boat grated on the pebbles of the shore, the sun rose over the waters. Ali was the first to leap out, and in a rapture of delight he flung himself down and kissed the ground—the face of his mother, as he said. “Brown Barbary” had been a harsh and cruel mother to him and his brother; yet he loved her with more than the ardor of the exile. And in his native garb and on his native soil, he was once more—what he had very much forgotten to be in England—a devout Mohammedan. He turned to the East and prostrated himself in the first adoration of the day.

“O Giver of Good to all! O Creator!” he murmured, in Arabic, while Molly looked on, half in wonder, half in love and pity mingled; for she thought that she had no superstitions.



Ali rose from his devotions and gazed around him with a proud and happy smile; and the bare, rocky hills that girt the little bay flushed in the newly-risen sun, as if with joy at the return of their lord.

For a little while the shore was busy with the coming and going of the boats, and the landing of the baggage and the cases of rifles and ammunition; and then, when all was done, the *Star of the South* steamed away, and Ali and his wife and the doctor were alone upon the beach.

When they turned their eyes from the sea to the land again, the rocks around showed themselves alive with stealthy, half-naked forms, for the natives of that piratical coast seem to scent a ship from afar with as keen a sense as vultures smell carrion.

"*Hola!*" called Ali, striding confidently forward. "Come forth! Behold, I am your lord returned! Ali of Tetuan!"

Then from the rocks they came forward, by ones and twos and threes—as cut-throat, threatening a crew as can be imagined. They were half-clothed, and their swarthy arms and shoulders in their lean muscularity seemed worked with cords and bands of iron. Their bare heads were clean shaved, save for one long lock which was mostly fair; for the



people of that wild northern coast are not true Moors, but Berbers—descendants of the original inhabitants of the country. They advanced, looking about them from under their brows, as if they were ever on the watch for attack or defence.

Molly viewed these men with wonder and dread, and asked herself if all her husband's subjects and dependents looked such ruffians.

"It is indeed our lord—Ali of Tetuan!" cried a tall old man, who had come in advance of the others and scanned the Grand Shereef with fierce, searching gaze.

Then he and all the company flung themselves on the ground, crying: "Our lord Ali! Protector of the poor! Helper of the needy! Feeder of the hungry!" and other compliments of a half-savage people, who lead a precarious and dangerous existence. The first man wriggled forward on the ground to kiss Ali's feet, and the others rose and flung up their long guns and caught them as they fell with wild cries of delight and welcome.

The change in Ali caused astonishment and something like fear in Molly. The Prince, who in civilized England and in European clothes had seemed but an agreeable gentleman, soft and pliable to the hand of a woman, was now become the robed



and stately autocrat, with the absolute power of life and death in the glance of his eye and the gesture of his hand. After an easy word or two of command, all these wild men stood in eager waiting for his orders. And in a little while three of them were racing, like goats, over the rocks and away over the hills to carry the news of his arrival to his own dependents, while the rest ran and gave their attention and strength to the carrying of the baggage and cases up from the shore to a safe and sheltered place among the hills. And it was something for Molly and the doctor to remember—neither of whom had seen such wild creatures before—how they admired such of the rifles as were exposed to view. They stroked them, patted them, kissed them, and laid the butts to their breasts and took aim. Their admiration was not merely that of children with new and wonderful toys, but that of fighters trained to arms who had never seen such beautiful weapons before; for the probability is that every one of these men was a good shot with his own ancient, clumsy gun, and some were sure to be skilled artisans and gunsmiths.

When all things were brought up from the shore, Ali and his party sat down in the shade to wait for the return of the messengers, who were expected



to bring horses to ride, mules or asses for the baggage, and horsemen for escort. While they sat, they talked and gathered the news of the countryside. One piece of ominous news was revealed: The army of the Sultan was marching north from Fez, against whom it was not known; but the tribes had taken to their arms and were on the watch, and that was why these men had appeared so stealthily that morning, for they thought that the yacht might be one of the Sultan's ships.

Weary of waiting, they set forward again a little way to the village of the Berbers, who patiently transported all the things they had already conveyed from the shore. It was late in October, and there had been a feeling of winter in the air when the travellers had left London, but here it was as delightful as the finest weather of an English summer. Wild roses bloomed and acacias, and bamboo canes with their tufted feathers of grass waved and rustled in the scented air, while the ground was carpeted with gaudy flowers like geraniums. At the village they were refreshed with goat's milk and barley cakes, and they continued to wait for the return of the messengers.

The sun was sinking behind the snow-capped mountains of Beni-Hassen when the Sheikh of the



village—the old man who had recognized Ali—looking forth from under his hand, declared he saw a man running. He must have had an amazing range of sight, for he pointed to a speck moving down a ridge about two miles distant, and higher than the height against which the village was set.

“It is Hassan,” said the Sheikh, still gazing from under his hand. “I know him. He runs with his fists up to his breast. And there also come Musa and Hamed over the hill; and Hamed outruns Musa. Allah preserve us! But they are alone! And they run as for life! What mischief is afoot?”

In less than a quarter of an hour Hassan raced panting up the slope, and all waited in silence and open-mouthed alarm till he had taken a breath or two, for his feet were bleeding, his legs were torn with cactus thorns, and the blood was clotted from a wound on his scalp.

“The Kasbah”—(*Kasbah* means *Castle*)—“of the sidi,” cried Hassan, between his pants, “is taken——”

“By the Kaid of the Sultan’s soldiers,” put in Hamed, who had just arrived.

“And all the slaves and the household of the sidi,” panted Musa, coming up behind, “have been put to the sword or carried off!”



"And," resumed Hassan, "I got this cut on the head from an accursed soldier of the Sultan when I was prying to learn more."

Then there arose a wail and a hubbub from the entire company of natives. They all wished to question the returned messengers, and they were all ready to utter the belief that the next stage in the destroying progress of the Sultan's troops would be an attack upon themselves.

"Peace, my children!" said Ali, striding in among them. "To prevent the soldiers of the son of a slave from pushing further at us we must push at them. It is necessary, above all things, that I rescue from them the stronghold and the home of my fathers."

To that courageous declaration there was an instant chorus of approval; for these Berbers of the north are daring and resolute to a fault. The darkness descended like a curtain while they eagerly discussed how the sidi's purpose might be achieved. It was quite dark when Molly slipped her hand into her husband's arm and drew him aside. She was trembling and eager and singularly hesitating for her. Had there been light to show them, Ali might have wondered at the pallor and anxiety of her countenance.



"If you are going to fight the Sultan's soldiers," said she, "you must have means."

"I have means, dearest one," he answered. "Have I not all these boxes of guns and ammunition?"

"But I mean money," said Molly. "You must have money also. They call money the sinews of war, and you have no sinews. I have—a good deal of money—sent from London for me to Gibraltar. Let me go and get it—or get some of it."

"I will not take your money, dear one," said he, "to spend in war."

"You must!" said she, earnestly and urgently. "Ah, yes, you will! What is mine is thine. Surely it is so."

"Well," said he, "let us speak of it further when we have slept."



## CHAPTER XXII.

## MOLLY IN TANGIER.

THE day of home-coming which had begun so brightly for Prince Ali of Tetuan ended thus in threatening of disaster and death. Did he, therefore, wish himself away again? Not he. For him there was no place where his life could be fulfilled except in his own land, and especially that part of it consecrated by his dear dead brother's memory. He regarded his brother as a martyr to the cause of his people; and, although he could not fulfill his brother's desire completely for him, his instincts as Prince and soldier told him that he must, and could, keep his inherited principality free from the devastation of the invader and the cruelty of the oppressor. He did not think of himself as philanthropic, but he truly was; for there are times when the only possible philanthropist is the soldier.

Having resolved, then, that the marauding ruffians of the Sultan must be driven from his home



and from among his people, and having concluded, after discussion with his wife and the doctor, that money would be needed for his enterprise, he reluctantly accepted Molly's offer.

So it came about that, very early next morning, Molly set out for Tangier, riding on an ass and escorted by four of the hardy mountaineers, of whom the chief was the old Sheikh. The doctor wished to go with her, but she had reasons for desiring to be alone on her venturesome journey, and she firmly declined the doctor's company. She counted on being absent a full week, but she went off as gaily as for a mere morning's excursion.

"May Allah protect thee, dear one!" said Ali, at parting; and Molly gave his thin dark hand a fervent pressure.

For it relieved her heart, congested with doubt and shame and fear, to believe that she would undergo fatigue, and run the risk of privation and death, for her husband's sake. Her mere liking for him had grown to love, and her love was becoming a passion. In that she found her acutest punishment for the crime she had committed against his brother. Love had softened poor Molly's nature, and, having cast out the devil of selfishness, as it ever must, it showed her how atrocious had been her offence. It



made her shed bitter tears in the dead of night, it scourged her spirit with scorpions of self-loathing, till any opportunity for self-punishment, for penance, for restitution, seemed to her a heaven of happiness.

We need not linger over Molly's journey to Tangier, for she did not. Steadily her ass, with the knock knees but the sure feet of her kind, plodded on from early morn till set of sun, with a very short interval at mid-day; and steadily Molly urged her forward, without increasing her pace; for the ass, like Time, would neither halt nor be hurried. It was a strange, picturesque land of mountain and stream, with very little wood, through which Molly passed. But she had no eyes for the face of the country; like her heart, they were bent far forward, and fixed upon her goal, and her goal was Gibraltar.

After three days' steady plodding she was in Tangier. She went to a quiet hotel where she had been known. She was recognized, despite her Moorish dress, and given entertainment; but her wild escort aroused much attention and some alarm. The Swiss proprietor was doubtful of letting them cross his threshold; but Molly overcame his scruples with her great art of persuasion.

"I must cross to Gibraltar on important business,"



said she; "and I know you will keep them for me till I come back. They will behave well, I promise you—if they are not insulted."

That arranged, she set out in a litter to visit the English ambassador. Sir Edward still represented Great Britain in the land of the Moors, and, because it was still October, he kept house in the villa on the hill. Molly would not give her name at Sir Edward's gate, but simply said that an English lady wished to see the Ambassador on business of importance. The Ambassador, who was much troubled with the plague of lady tourists, sent one of his secretaries to see her. But to him she would neither declare her business nor reveal her identity; she remained veiled, and said she *must* see Sir Edward.

"I am an old acquaintance of his," said she.

Then Sir Edward came, though in something of a fume of impatience.

"You wish to see me personally, madame?" he said. But his frown was smoothed out, and his curt tone became suavely modulated, when Molly raised her veil and showed herself as fresh and lovely as ever. "Good gracious, Mrs. Neale!"

"I've ceased to be Mrs. Neale for some time, Sir Edward," said Molly, with her enchanting smile.

"True! True!" said he. "I should have re-



membered! I have heard—but not officially. You are Grand Shereefia and Princess of Tetuan.” He bowed and smiled, and said, “Well, well,” as if in assent to a strange and almost incredible fact. “Well, now,” he continued, after a pause, which she filled in with a luminous, enigmatic smile, “what can I do for you?”

Molly was alert and business-like at once.

“I have something of importance to do in Gibraltar to-morrow; I must cross in the morning,” said she.

“And you would like me to send a dragoman—or a secretary?—with you.”

“A dragoman, please, Sir Edward, will be quite enough—if you will be so good; and a note from yourself to the Manager of the Bank, where a letter of credit will have arrived.”

“What would you like me to say?” asked Sir Edward, drawing up at once to pen and ink.

“Oh, just that you know me,” said Molly, lightly, “and that you hope he will make a point of obliging me with the sum I need in cash.”

“I see,” said Sir Edward. “Is the sum a large one?”

“Five thousand pounds,” answered Molly, in a tone of matter-of-fact.



"Five thousand pounds!" echoed Sir Edward, in amazement. "In gold? But, my dear lady, have you any idea how heavy that would be?"

"Oh," said she, carelessly, "I can carry some of it in Bank of England notes: I know the Moorish Jews will take them as readily as gold. Don't be anxious. I can manage to carry it all."

Sir Edward laid down his pen, to perform what was, if not a diplomatic, at least a conscientious, duty.

"I think I ought to ask you," said he, "where you mean to take all that money in cash, and what you mean to do with it."

"I mean to bring it back here," said Molly, with a touch of impatience, "and give it to my husband."

"Give it to Prince Ali?" exclaimed Sir Edward. "Here? He is back in Morocco then?"

"He is," answered Molly—"in the neighborhood of his own place."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Sir Edward, jumping to his feet as if stung by a wasp. "But he is outlawed by the Sultan, and the Sultan has sent an expedition to seize his Kasbah!"

"I know," said Molly. "That is why I'm here. Prince Ali means to have and to enjoy his own, in spite of the Sultan."



"He will fight, you mean?" queried Sir Edward.

"Will he not!" said Molly.

"That will complicate," said Sir Edward, wrinkling his brows, "what has been a very awkward situation."

"There are some people of consequence, Sir Edward," said Molly, "who seem to think it will simplify the situation."

"Whom do you mean?" asked the Ambassador.

"The French authorities," answered Molly. "They have been trying their hardest for ever so long to prevail on Ali to make himself a French subject. If he does—and they think he will—they will help him in his fight with the Sultan, and the Sultan will not come off best."

"And I suppose," smiled Sir Edward, "to establish their maxim about 'finding the woman,' they have tried to enlist you on their side."

"They have," answered Molly; "and, failing me, they have tried to enlist force." And she related (as fully as she thought necessary) their adventures at Oran.

"That certainly looks," said Sir Edward, "as if they meant business." And thoughtfully he felt his grey moustache.

"Don't you mind, Sir Edward?" asked Molly, piqued with his apparent lack of interest.



"Mind, my dear lady? Of course I do—personally. For one thing, the Frenchifying of Ali would mean your Frenchification too, and that I should regret."

"Not more than I should, Sir Edward. But I had not thought of that, to tell the truth. Is there no way of keeping me from becoming French?"

"The fact is," said Sir Edward, in a tone of confidence, "our Foreign Office does not care to be bothered with such things. Prince Ali, I may tell you, has caused the Office a good deal of trouble all the time he has been in England; and I imagine the Government would be glad if it had heard the last of him. But," he added, suddenly resuming his pen, "I may have thought of something by the time you get back from Gibraltar."

So he wrote the note Molly had desired for the manager of the bank, and handed it to her; and thus she understood the interview was at an end.

Next morning a dragoman from the Embassy waited at her hotel to accompany her across the sea to Gibraltar. On the way to the shore she attracted considerable attention—not on her own account, but because she, being apparently a Moorish lady, was attended by a man who plainly belonged to one of the European Embassies. The notice she thus drew



upon herself was not lessened on the shore, which was unusually crowded, and where she was caused unusual delay.

"What are we waiting for?" she asked, impatiently of the dragoman, raising a corner of her veil.

A Moor who was standing by turned himself sharply at the words, and showed himself to be De Courcel! He could scarcely have seen Molly's face, but he probably recognized the voice, the more readily that the words uttered were English. He answered at once in English, before the dragoman had shaped a reply.

"The Sid' El Helba, madame, has returned from his English mission, and is about to land. Is madame waiting to cross the water?"

Molly said no word; but the dragoman, who perhaps recognized De Courcel, made answer with some volubility.

"Yes, sir. Madame crosses to Gibraltar, and I go with her to take care," said he.

"Ah, then," said De Courcel, "madame goes to return?"

"Madame," answered the obliging dragoman, "returns with me when her business is done."

Thus he spake, and Molly did not dare to interrupt him, lest she should absolutely reveal herself.



De Courcel smiled, with a sidelong eye upon her veiled face.

“*Balak! Balak!* Way there for the Sid’ El Helba!”

The cries came swelling along, and people ran this way and that. De Courcel moved off, saying, “We shall meet again, madame.”

When the bustle of the Basha’s landing was over, Molly and her dragoman were allowed to go on board the boat for Gibraltar.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## MOLLY PLOTS AND PLANS.

MOLLY was terribly disturbed—not to say frightened—by that awkward and unexpected encounter with De Courcel, and especially by his parting words, which seemed to her to convey a threat.

*“We shall meet again, madame.”*

What should that mean but the intention of way-laying her on her return from Gibraltar?—of making a prisoner of her, perhaps—for she was not ignorant of the ordinary law that a wife puts on the nationality of her husband! But why should De Courcel—or the French authorities, or the Moorish, for whom he might be supposed to act—why should he seek to take forcible possession of her person? There could be no doubt that he (and they) might hope to get at her husband through her; and perhaps he (or they) had some suspicion, or some means of learning the purpose for which she was making the trip to Gibraltar.

Presuming, then, that De Courcel wished to way-



lay and arrest her on her return, how could she avoid him? There was no way by which she could return to Morocco save Tangier; besides that, she had engaged to see the English Ambassador again. So her problem was how to return and pass through Tangier, and yet give De Courcel (or those for whom he acted) the slip. That was her difficulty; and ponder and contrive as she might, she saw no way of getting over it.

But she had barely stepped ashore at Gibraltar, when Providence (Molly called it "Providence," and was properly grateful) confronted her with a means of evading, if not of overcoming, her difficulty. She was driving in a victoria to the bank when, in a press of traffic, her vehicle was brought almost to a stand. She noted then that a lady on the pavement was regarding her veiled figure very closely and earnestly; and, having noted that, she promptly recognized the lady. She was that Miss Cameron, palmist and seer, who figured actively in the earlier scenes of this story. Without thought of anything but speaking to an acquaintance, Molly told the dragoman to step out and beg the lady to come to her. Miss Cameron came, wondering.

"How do you do, dear?" said Molly, raising her veil sufficiently to give a glimpse of her face.



"Good gracious!" exclaimed Miss Cameron. "It's Mrs. Neale! I mean, of course, the Princess Ali. Oh, I'm so glad to see you! But do excuse me if I ask why you are wearing these things?"

"Well," said Molly, "I have just come over from Tangier on some business, and I don't want to be recognized. Besides," she added, "I have become almost a Moor."

"Oh, what a good idea," exclaimed Miss Cameron, "to go about like that when you don't want to be known! Oh," she burst forth, "I am very unhappy! Do let me tell you about it!"

"I am going to the bank," said Molly, "and then I am going to a hotel. You can talk to me on the way. I want to get back to Tangier to-day."

"Oh," said Miss Cameron, "I am going to Tangier. I must. That's what I am unhappy about."

Instantly Molly's attention was arrested. For some reason Miss Cameron wanted to cross to Tangier. What if——? And in that mood of surmise and self-debate she heard, half-absently, Miss Cameron tell her story of unhappiness. Yet there was small excuse for inattention; for it was an extraordinary story, and such as most women would love to hear.

This is the story Miss Cameron told:—



She was staying with some friends (Miss Cameron was always staying with friends) at a sunny, sandy place on the south coast of England. She was not very well: she was run down. One day, on her return from a tiring walk over the glaring sands, she dreamed a dream; in truth, she saw a vision (whether in the body or out of the body she could not tell)—a vision from which she woke in a shaking fright. She saw a great plain of burning sand, and over it she went toiling in spirit after a friend, who (she somehow was aware) moved with his life in his hand. Over the plain she came to a castle on a green hill in a valley; and in that castle, deep in a dungeon, she found the friend for whom she sought. He had incurred the deep hatred of the owner of the castle.

(Molly made mental note of the fact that the "friend" of Miss Cameron was allowed to be a man.)

He treasured a letter in his bosom which (she was conscious) the owner of the castle wished to have. Presently there came a fierce man, with fiery eyes, a black beard, and in a great green turban.

"A Shereef," said Molly. "That means a man that claims to be descended from the Prophet Mohammed or his family."



Miss Cameron continued her story:—The man in the green turban dragged her friend away, out of the dungeon and up into a hall of light, where the owner of the castle was waiting to receive him. He stood up boldly before the lord of the castle, and refused to surrender the letter he kept in his bosom. Then the lord of the castle fell upon him in a great rage, crying out, "Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!" There seemed to be a blinding flash and an explosion—and Miss Cameron knew no more. The vision was dissolved; and she sat up, fully awake, and trembling with excitement; and the people about her said she had uttered a cry of mortal terror.

"I see," said Molly. "I understand. And you have come here—you intend to cross to Morocco—to look for that friend?"

"Yes; I do," answered Miss Cameron.

"May I venture," said Molly, "to express my suspicion who the friend is?"

"You may, if you wish to," answered Miss Cameron.

"You have confessed, you know," said Molly, "that it is a man. Well, I think the man you know best, that has anything to do with Morocco, is the Frenchman, Monsieur De Courcel. I believe he is the friend you are anxious about."



"Since you have guessed so well about the one man, dear," said Miss Cameron, with a smile, "perhaps you can make a guess at the other. Who do you think is the man who has him in his power?"

"I have not thought of him," answered Molly.

"Shall I tell you who he is?" said Miss Cameron. "I saw him quite plainly. He is the Prince Ali of Tetuan."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Molly; for in truth she was astonished and alarmed at the suggestion, which had not occurred to her, but which now seemed very feasible.

"It was the Prince Ali I saw in my vision," repeated Miss Cameron: "that I assure you, my dear."

The inference was plain: the vision concerned Molly as well as Miss Cameron. But Molly was silent. She was occupied with the elaboration of a plan which should ensure her safe passage through any Moorish or French watchfulness at Tangier, and her triumphant return to her husband, with every available means for maintaining himself against all that Moor or Frenchman might attempt against him.

She entered the bank alone, and was received by the manager, whom she asked to see. She presented her letter from Sir Edward, and heard that her letter



of credit had arrived—just arrived, She made her demand for five thousand pounds, but hastened to make the remarkable qualification:

“I am in no immediate haste for the money, however. This afternoon by closing time will do.”

Then she returned to her carriage and the company of Miss Cameron. She seemed excessively worried, in the brief glimpse she allowed of her face. Miss Cameron inquired if all had gone well with her business in the bank.

“Well, yes—and no, dear,” answered Molly. “I can’t have the money I want till to-morrow; and that’s a disappointment, because I intended to take the boat back to Tangier to-day with you. You’re going to-day, aren’t you?”

“I intended to go to-day,” answered Miss Cameron.

“I would go to-day if I were you,” answered Molly. “There is no time to be lost. I’ll give you a note to Sir Edward—our Ambassador, you know—and his dragoman will go back with you.”

“It’s awfully kind of you, Princess,” said Miss Cameron.

“Where are you staying?” asked Molly.

“At the Shore Hotel,” answered Miss Cameron.

“I’ll go there, too,” said Molly; “and we can



finish our talk. I can tell you one or two things to help you. You've never been in Morocco before, I suppose?"

"Never," said Miss Cameron.

"That's a pity," said Molly; "especially a pity when you wear European clothes—even when you have an Embassy dragoman with you."

"What can I do?" said Miss Cameron.

"Well, dear, you could go across and move about Tangier unnoticed if you happened to wear the native dress—a dress like this of mine."

"But I suppose that can't be got at a moment's notice?"

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Molly, in a burst of generosity. "I'll be kind and lend you mine, and you can lend me a jacket and skirt and a hat: either what you have on, or anything else."

"Oh, that *is* kind!" said Miss Cameron. "But won't that be awkward and disagreeable for you?"

"I know the people and the language, you see," said Molly. "I won't run such risks as you would."

That seemed a very natural, kindly, and proper exchange; and Miss Cameron evidently had no suspicion of any purpose other than what appeared behind it. The exchange was effected; and the



two, as if to seal their complete understanding, sat down to a meal together. Soon after that it was time for Miss Cameron to prepare for her passage across the Strait. Molly wrote her a note addressed to Sir Edward, consigned her (in her Moorish dress) to the care of the dragoman, and gave her her blessing. So Miss Cameron departed.

“I’m doing her no harm—no wrong,” said Molly to herself, in excuse of her conduct, as she saw her go. “If she falls into De Courcel’s hands,—or arms—instead of me, it is only what she most intensely desires.”

But as soon as Miss Cameron was gone (arrayed in Molly’s Moorish garments), Molly (arrayed in Miss Cameron’s English hat and coat and skirt) set off incontinently to a certain place where she could have full and authentic news of the movements of the garrison. It will be remembered that Molly was a British soldier’s widow, and she knew Gibraltar as well as Kensington or Bayswater. The particular place where she called shall remain unnamed. She learned, however, what she wished to know. She remembered that in the evening of every day, or of every other day, a private vessel left Gibraltar for Tangier to bring fresh vegetables and fruit, and such-like produce, for the garrison. At the same time despatches (if there were any),



were carried to the British representative in Tangier. The vessel was known as "the Garrison boat." She now learned that "the Garrison boat" would cross that evening early; and she made interest with the skipper of the boat (whom she had known and charmed in other days), so that he gaily agreed to carry her over the Strait—since she was in haste, and had been so unfortunate as to miss the regular public service.

Why did Molly strive to compass that arrangement? She had never intended—if she could help it—to wait till the next day, because she saw that, if De Courcel discovered quickly, as he probably would, that the lady in the Moorish dress whom he had caught at from the regular boat was not the person he had hoped to lay hold of—even herself—he would be certain to lie in wait for the next arrival of the boat, and her well-contrived scheme to make use of Miss Cameron would be of no effect. By passing over in "the Garrison boat," Molly would arrive not only by an unexpected means, but also before De Courcel could have time to turn round. Therein, she reckoned, lay her safety.

Behold our Princess Molly, then, tossing away from Gibraltar in "the Garrison boat" just after dark. She had five thousand pounds upon her (two hundred pounds in two bags of golden sovereigns



and half-sovereigns, and the rest in crisp Bank of England notes), and she had hope, high hope, and ambition before her. But she was not only eager and ambitious; to her own surprise, she was also in love. And when the moon rose and flooded the surface of the sea and the ever-romantic African shore with her soft, tender, and mysterious light, then Molly was very much in tune for sentiment; and she lingered fondly and ardently on the thought of her princely lover and husband whom the burnished sun had touched both in temper and in look.

It was late when she landed, but not too late, she conceived, to accomplish more business that night. She hastened to her hotel, summoned the old chief of her guard of mountaineers, and with him set out on mule-back to the house of Sir Edward on the hill. As she rode away, with the old mountaineer at the head of her mule, a man came from among the shadows about the hotel and followed after, still keeping among the shadows as much as possible. Molly saw and noted him, and her heart misgave her; for, though he was habited like a Riffian, with his long lock of hair hanging from the side of his shaven scalp, and his long gun under his arm, she found it hard to believe he was merely a night-prowler, intent upon laying hold of whatever unconsidered trifles of plunder he might come upon.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## HAST THOU FOUND ME, O MINE ENEMY?

THE man followed continually—falling behind at the opener and better lighted parts of the road—followed all the way to within sight of Sir Edward's gate. But he did nothing but follow, and when Molly found herself under Sir Edward's roof without molestation she breathed freely again. Her mountaineer guard she left at the gate with the mule; but she said nothing to him about the lurking Riffian, lest he should be tempted to turn upon the man, and trouble might come of it.

But Molly's feeling of security passed very quickly. She was no sooner within Sir Edward's house than she became aware that the Ambassador must be entertaining that night. There were many lights, and the abounding sounds of piano-playing here and laughter and talk there. She had barely taken in the significance of these things when a sight met her



eyes which smote her heart chill with dread. De Courcel stood before her, smiling!

"I said we should meet again, madame," said he, in French.

She had it on her lips to ask, "Where is Miss Cameron?" but she refrained. She looked at him helplessly an instant, without speaking. She felt as if Sir Edward had betrayed her, for De Courcel's dress proclaimed him a guest. But she reminded herself, however, that, after all, she was in the English Ambassador's house, and therefore under his protection. But what especially roused her to the sense of herself and resentment of De Courcel was his next sentence. Looking on her with a show of tenderness and triumph combined, and with a generous spread of the hands, he spoke again in French.

"My word of honor, madame, I truly fill myself with sorrow for you! You find yourself, as one says, between the Devil and the Deep Sea! I have pity of you!"

"I have no need, no desire, for your pity, sir!" answered Molly. "And I know not why you continue to pursue me with these misconceived sentiments of yours!"

"You do not understand, madame?" said De



Courcel, again alert and Mephistophelian. "Then I will give myself the trouble to explain. There is time. I see you look to the door; but his Excellency cannot come for a quarter of an hour; he is what you say 'engaged.' I saw you arrive, and I made certain to have the first word—and a sufficient one. Sit you, madame."

Molly hesitated but an instant. She saw no advantage in making a scene, in breaking from De Courcel's presence and from the room. She was truly hard beset; but she accepted the situation, and sat down to hear what De Courcel had to say.

"When the bird has the string about its leg, madame, it merely makes the string tighter by trying to escape," he began, evidently well pleased with his figure of speech. There is a string between us, madame; you are at one end, and I am at the other—no matter which; but I declare I am not the bird. Now I know why you are here, madame; and I make guess why you cross to Gibraltar. You go to Gibraltar to get money to aid Prince Ali to fight the Sultan. By the way, did my Prince find the rifles and the ammunition in good state? You see I—we—have no desire that the Prince should not fight the Sultan: for France it is all the better that he should. So continue,



madame, to provide him with all the money. But also you have come here to his Excellency to urge him to take Prince Ali under English protection; but you will not succeed."

"If you are so certain I cannot succeed," said Molly, "why trouble about it?"

De Courcel blinked an instant, and then he went on again. "Well, if I allow for a moment—to myself—that madame might succeed, it is only of compliment to the charm and persuasion that madame may practice upon his Excellency. Her Britannic Majesty's Government desires that it be not troubled with such matters; and the Government is wise, for the future in Morocco is with France," he continued, with that gay and expansive boastfulness which Frenchmen delight in. "The English cannot help it; the Moors cannot help it; it is *Kismet*—it is *Fate*. And all they do will be rubbed out by Fate—like that." And he gracefully waggled his hand, as if rubbing out chalkings on a black-board.

"Again I say," repeated Molly, "if Fate has made all that certain, why trouble?"

"Because, madame, the gods help those who help themselves. Fate always needs agents; without agents Fate would be a giant without hands, with-



out feet. I am one of the hands of Fate; I accomplish the design of Fate."

"This is interesting," said Molly, sarcastic for once; "but what has it to do with me?"

"Because you, madame, seek to hinder—to contradict—the design of Fate. To return, madame, to details; you try to prevent—still try to prevent—Prince Ali from accepting his Fate, and putting himself in the arms of France."

"Is it not perfectly natural?" said Molly. "I am English: since he cannot with safety continue Moorish, I wish him to become English, too."

"Dear madame," said De Courcel, "is it necessary to argue the matter again? I have given you strong reasons before; now I will give you stronger. You think I was a fool and threw away the string by which I held you? You think I burned a certain little parchment, written with Arabic characters?—you think I put it in the fire when I saw you last in London? Behold!" Triumphantly he drew from his pocket the well-known, damnatory bit of writing, and showed Molly plainly the signature of "MARY NEALE."

"But I saw it burn!" exclaimed Molly, with such a desperate pain at her heart as a woman may feel when a doctor tells her she has but a week to live.



"You saw a paper burn, but not that!" answered De Courcel.

Molly sat with her hands tightly clasped in her lap, and gazed at her tormentor. She could not doubt his design; but he did not spare her the recital.

"You, madame, must prevail upon Prince Ali to seek the protection of France, or else I put this little parchment into his hand. I set out for his Kasbah this very night—the Sid' El Helba has already gone—and I desire, madame, that you promise your persuasion, and also that you accompany me on the road. Now, madame, I pray you decide."

As we know, Molly was not unused to finding herself in a critical situation; and while custom had not dulled for her the horror and the dread of such a position, it had provoked in her such policy and resource as De Courcel himself might have envied. She quickly took her decision. She resolved to accept De Courcel's terms, with the full intention of finding a way of escape from them before the end was reached. She rose.

"Very well," she said, "I am not prepared to defy you,—as I should like to do. So I will go with you."



"And you give your promise to make Prince Ali the protected of France?"

"I will do all I can," she answered, with the persistent feminine desire for evasion.

"That is not sufficient, madame. You must give your complete promise—which, me I know, you are quite able to fulfill.

"Very well," said she, "I give it. But I must first return to my hotel, and find the mountain-men who were my escort to Tangier."

"From where, madame?"

"From the place," answered Molly, readily, "where I left my husband, the Prince."

"Certainly, madame," said De Courcel, "you shall return to your hotel, and find your mountain-men, and a faithful friend and servant of mine—who is also a mountain-man—shall accompany you."

"Ah," said Molly, "a man of the Riff, who already has accompanied me from my hotel to this house?"

"Probably the same, madame," answered De Courcel, with a smile.

"And now," she said, "I have come here to see Sir Edward, and sent in my name; how am I to leave without seeing him?"

"*Mais donc,*" said De Courcel, twisting about on his heels, "here is Sir Edward."



In truth, Sir Edward was just entering the room, and Molly maliciously left to De Courcel the explanation of his presence with her. The open door and the open window furnished him with sufficient excuse. He had seen the "dear Princess," who was an old acquaintance, and he had ventured in to offer his homages and his services. He conceived madame the Princess wished to return to her husband, and since he was setting out in that direction this very night, he had begged that she would journey with him and have the protection of his party, and madame the Princess had graciously consented.

"Yes," said Molly, compelled to speak by the query in Sir Edward's look, "that is so. I have agreed to set out at once—on my return to my hotel with M. De Courcel." Then it was necessary for her to assign some open reason for her visit to the Ambassador; for, although De Courcel retired to the threshold of the window as if to allow her privacy of speech, she knew he would listen, and if she spoke low and long he would suspect her of breaking her promise. She therefore said in a voice he could hear, "I have to thank you, Sir Edward, for making my business at Gibraltar easy. And I wanted to ask you if you had seen a Miss



Cameron to-day—this evening? I saw her off from Gibraltar by the regular boat, which my business would not permit me to catch: I crossed, you know, by 'the Garrison boat.' I sent her to you with your dragoman."

"Cameron? Cameron?" said Sir Edward. "Yes, she called; but I could not see her, and she is coming again in the morning."

"When she does come," said Molly, earnestly, "listen to what she has to say, Sir Edward: she's a prophetess, you know—a second sight person—a seer." Sir Edward smiled in toleration. "It is true," said Molly; "and M. De Courcel there could tell you something of the truth of her prophecies—could you not, M. De Courcel?"

"What then, madame?" said M. De Courcel, turning him about and taking a step or two nearer.

"Tell of the truth of Miss Cameron's prophecies?"

"Oh, but, yes," he answered. "Unfortunately, it is late now to speak of such things." And he turned him to the window again.

Molly seized that opportunity for one urgent word to the Ambassador—urgent and passionate, and bare of pretence.

"For Heaven's sake," she said, in a low voice, "follow after us as quickly as you can,—if you would avert a great disaster! I rely on you!"



But Sir Edward was middle-aged, and altogether unused to the melodramatic side of diplomacy. Her urgent words merely flustered and puzzled him.

"Good-bye, Sir Edward," she said, aloud and in ordinary tones; "and thank you very much. I hope we may meet again soon."

"Yes, yes," said he; "I hope we may."

And so they said "Good-bye," and Molly went out into the night with De Courcel.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## THE GREEN TURBANS TO THE RESCUE.

So Molly rode out of Tangier that night as the moon was going down. It was a well-mounted party to which she was attached, for its leader, De Courcel, was in haste; and yet the mountaineers who formed Molly's escort maintained the pace on foot. They rode and they ran through the rest of the night, eastward, and still eastward, with bare dark hills on either hand—rode and ran until lemon-colored tints in the sky before them climbed upward, and slowly, like the waking of a sleepy giant, gave easy place to the rose of light. At length the brilliance of the sun himself looked dazzlingly over the edge of the world; and then the whole cavalcade stopped, as if at the word of command, and all the natives prostrated themselves for the morning prayer—

*“O Giver of good to all! O Creator!”*



They ate a morsel, and then rode on again while the day remained cool. About ten o'clock a halt was called, tents were pitched, and a good breakfast was prepared. Of breakfast all ate heartily, for the air was of the sort that provoked an eager appetite—the chief persons eating first, and the escort and servants afterwards. Molly was again in the guise of a Moorish lady, a character which she must maintain with the tribesmen, and therefore she ate her meal apart from all the others—for which dispensation she was grateful. When breakfast was eaten, the whole company collapsed to sleep in what shade there was, looking, some like little mounds of dirty clothes, and others like sheets spread out to dry.

But Molly was wakeful; and she appeared to have all the waking to herself. No other man—not even De Courcel—seemed to have a single care; while fear, and the resolve to be rid of the cause of fear, seemed to sit within her, over against each other, gnawing fiercely at her very life. She envied the meanest, barest, and most ignorant of her mountain escort, a brown stalwart figure prone in the lassitude of sleep, secure in his belief in *Kismet*: What is ordained to happen will happen, and it is of no avail to struggle against it: it is the will of God. **That** belief made him a Stoic, and he could look



even in the face of Death with calm eyes. But she—she was a rebel against *Kismet*: she refused to believe that anything was ordained, that there was any Fate which could not be avoided by a strong will or a subtle contrivance. She had the strong will, but where was her subtle contrivance? What could she do to give effect to her fierce desire?

She was racked with fears, with feeblenesses, with impotences; and she sat on the ground clasping her knees, and rocking herself to and fro. While in that paroxysm she became aware that the hem of her veil was being tugged at. She ceased her rocking and looked. She saw—and the sight moved even Molly, the hardened Molly, to tears—the old man who was chief of her escort kneeling on the ground and seeking to attract her attention by alternately kissing the margin of her veil and softly tugging at it.

“What is it?” she asked. “What is your petition?”

“Be not offended, for I am an old man, the father of many children. The Lalla is afflicted!” murmured the old fellow. “The lady of my lord weeps and rocks to and fro in trouble! Why is her heart shaken, and why does she not sleep?”

Then Molly bethought her of Miss Cameron’s



dream or vision, which had, in truth, much impressed her; and she resolved to do something for its fulfillment. As thus:—It was as sure as prophecy could be that De Courcel and Prince Ali must come face to face in the Prince's Kasbah, but it was much to be preferred that De Courcel—as the dream ordained—should appear before the Prince as a prisoner rather than as an equal or a superior—as he would if he continued as he was going. How could his condition be changed on the march? She put the matter thus to the old man:—

“This son of the French travels, you must know, to my lord's Kasbah to join the Sid' El Helba, who makes war on my lord in the Sultan's behalf. Moreover, he hopes to ensnare my lord in the toils of France. I am troubled and cannot sleep because I can see no way to do anything to prevent these things.”

“What does the Lalla wish to do? Let her speak, and it shall be done,” said the old man, confidently. “Does the Lalla wish this proud Son of the French to be made as one of the forgotten?”

“Nay,” said Molly, “I do not wish him killed. But if by any means we may carry him prisoner to my lord, and take from him certain papers which concern my lord—he carries them in his wallet or



in his bosom—then it would please me well : I should cease from trouble and I should sleep.”

“We are few in number to take prisoners,” said the old man : “I and my three.”

“What is the country we pass through?” asked Molly. “Will none of the tribes aid us?”

“The tribes, O my lady,” answered the old man, “would hang back if they were told to make prisoner this Son of the French ; for if they but lift a horse-shoe from a road over which one of the protected of France has travelled, France, they know, makes trouble for them with the Sultan. But—it is well bethought—we must pass near by Shashan, the home of the most holy Shereefs, of whom my lord is chief : could a message be sent to them that the lady of my lord is on the road and desires them to rescue her from the infidel Son of France and to carry him prisoner to my lord, doubtless they would mount and ride with one accord.”

“The counsel of the wise is with thee, my friend!” said Molly, with gladness. “Let it be done as thou sayest. But who shall carry the message?”

“That one of my three, O my lady,” said the old man, pointing to the prostrate, lithe, and sinewy figure which Molly had already taken note of. “He is fleet of foot as a wild roe, fleetier than the stallion of the sea : he is my son, O my lady.”



"You will give him his message then, my father?" said Molly.

"I will give him his message when he wakes; he must sleep, for sleep is food to weary limbs. And he shall slip out of our company anon, like a snake dropped from a basket."

And so it was. After their siesta the animals were gathered in from their grazing, with much shouting the pack-beasts were reloaded, and then the whole cavalcade moved forward again with the sun burning behind them and heating their backs. Molly kept her eye on her escort, and at intervals counted them over. She counted again and again, and found them all there, and her anxiety made her wonder and fear lest the scheme of the old man had been abandoned. There came a bit of difficult going, and Molly had to give her attention to her mule and herself. She had to dip her head to avoid being caught up, like Absalom, between earth and heaven, and then even the sure-footed mule slithered and slipped on the steep path amid rocks down to the bed of a brawling stream which they must ford.

"If I were seeking to slip away," thought Molly within herself, "this is the place I would choose."

When next she considered and counted her escort, there was one missing. Apparently another also



had been keeping an eye on her mountain-men; for De Courcel rode up to her side in no good humor, and said:

"Were there not four men of your escort, madame? Where is the fourth?"

"Really, sir," laughed Molly, "am I the keeper of my escort? It would seem I should look after them, instead of them looking after me!"

De Courcel left her, and went to the old man. "Son of a mountain-goat," said he, in anger, "count your men. Had you not three with you? Where is the third?"

"Certainly, my lord," answered the old man, "I had three with me. Wah! Wah! Truly," said he, pretending to seek out his fellows with a roaming eye, "one is gone! And he is my son! Poor lad, he must have been carried away with the stream! Wallahy! Let us go back and search!"

There came a roar of laughter from all the natives who heard; for it was too funny to imagine a strapping, active fellow, as each one of the escort was, carried away by a brawling stream which was nowhere more than a foot deep.

"Let him go," said De Courcel, sulkily. "Doubtless he will easily find his way back to his father's house. We cannot delay. Zit! Zit!" And so he urged all forward again.



The day was far spent, and the shadows were lengthened before them, when they came to the crossing of another awkward stream. As before, and as always in that region, the descent to the stream was steep, because of the scouring and hollowing effects of the winter floods. The ascent from the stream on the other side was, of course, also steep. The first of the pack-animals, abused with cries and belabored with blows, were just topping the farther bank, against a gully that opened on the stream, when the shot of a firelock rang out, and one of the mules fell with his burden. Instantly all was confusion among beasts and men—mules screaming, donkeys braying, and men yelling and cursing in the most apt and picturesque Moorish speech. In the confusion there rang out from behind loud shouts of "Allah! Allah!" and those who were still in the stream, on looking back, saw two bands of horsemen in green turbans ride forth from two breaks in the river bank, above and below the ford—ride with twirling gun or flashing sabre.

"It is an ambuscade!" cried De Courcel, who had just reached the farther brink of the stream.

He drew his revolver and fired at the leader of the party nearest him. But the leader—an active man on a black horse—stooped and was almost hid be-



hind the neck of his beast. The revolver-shot must have grazed the spirited horse, for he screamed and reared. But his rider brought him down with his cruel Moorish bit, and set him full tilt at De Courcel. The horse tore through the water, and before the French cavalier bethought him to take another shot, he was caught on the back of the head with the butt of the long jezail swung by the lithe brown arm of the leader of the Green Turbans. De Courcel collapsed upon his horse, and slid down to the ground on the margin of the stream. The leader of the Green Turbans leaped from his saddle, dragged the Frenchman away from the water, and set him in a sitting posture against a stone. He told one of his fellows to keep guard on him, while he turned to see how the business of the rest was done.

The fall of De Courcel put an end to all thought of resistance—even had resistance been feasible—against a score of horsemen. But, in truth, the natives who had been ready to serve the Frenchman were much more ready to serve the Green Turbans, who were all technically, in their view, what we should call “gentlemen”; they were all Shereefs, descendants of the Prophet, and therefore their persons were aristocratic and sacred.

Something like order was induced very speedily,



and the cavalcade was led up out of the river-bed. Molly and her escort came last, and the old man who was chief of her escort brought the leader of the Green Turbans to her saddle-bow. He was a quick-eyed, intelligent-seeming gentleman, and he would have been handsome had he not been so deeply marked with smallpox.

"I praise Allah," said the Green Turban, "that my lady has given me the privilege to relieve her of the company of the Son of France, and to conduct her to the presence of my lord. I accepted in faith the message of the young man, else I had not known that my lord had yet taken to himself a wife, nor known that my lord's Kasbah is occupied by the soldiers of the Sultan of Marakesh. But we live without news in Shashan. What are the commands of my lady? Let her slave hear the music of her voice!"

Molly spoke in a low voice, while she continued veiled.

"It is my desire, O Shereef, that the Son of France be carried prisoner to my lord, and that we set forward with all speed to arrive in his presence. But first let me look upon the Frenchman."

She pushed forward her mule to the place where De Courcel reclined against the rock, still unconscious.



“Take his wallet from him,” said she, to the old chief of her escort, “and give it to me. And search in his bosom if he have papers there.”

The wallet was taken and handed up to her. And then—a small parchment from the man’s inner bosom. She barely needed to look at that to be sure of its horrid identity. She squeezed it tight in her hand under her veil until they were out upon the road again; and then she crammed the nauseous morsel into her mouth.

Like the document swallowed by the man in the Bible, it was bitter in the mouth, but sweet in the stomach.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE DEMON LETTER.

AND so they rode on; and Molly felt at peace. De Courcel was brought to, and, mounted on his own horse with his hands tied behind him, he was led forward a well-guarded prisoner, with no chance of escape, for he had no friend in all the company.

Meanwhile, during Molly's absence, her fate was being decided by the relentless march of events. Prince Ali had not only the military instincts of all his race, he was also a born commander. He saw at once the necessity for swift action, and for striking a crushing blow before his presence had been suspected. He secretly sent out messages to all the tribes of the mountains, calling them to arms. He chose from among them and those around him two hundred of the best shots, and armed them with his new breech-loaders, in the use of which they needed little instruc-



tion; and then he confidently set out to make a sudden attack upon the invaders.

Ali's ancestral Kasbah, or castle, was strongly placed on a little hill in the midst of a valley. The mountains that encircled the valley were much higher than the hill, and modern artillery in position on them could have pounded the castle to dust in half-an-hour. But neither the Sultan's army nor Ali's adventurous handful had any cannon, and therefore, once held, the castle could only be taken by assault or by surprise. Ali was not strong enough to attempt assault, and he therefore decided for surprise. He concealed his men in the caves and among the rocks of a gorge of the mountains, and sent out a trusty scout to discover the condition of things around the castle.

After dark, and when the moon had risen, the scout was reported by the outposts as coming up the glen in company with a woman on an ass. The first thought of Ali and the doctor was that it must be Molly returned. Yet how should she return that way? When the scout and the woman arrived she was veiled, and she refused to remove her veil until she was alone with Ali and the doctor.

"Alula!" they both exclaimed, when she did unveil in the moonlight.

"Yes, sidis," said she, "it is indeed Alula, and



Alula come with a very wicked and shameful intention. Is it not shameful and wicked for a daughter to betray her father? That is what I have come for, and I think that, if I were a dutiful daughter, I would repent and go away without a word of consequence having passed my lips."

They persuaded her neither the one way nor the other, but they asked her how she and her father came to be there. She answered that, when Ali's flight was discovered, the Basha set out on his return to Morocco. As soon as he reached Tangier, he received orders from the Sultan to take command of the attack on Ali's country, and to bring up more troops. And there he was now in Ali's castle.

"And I came," said she, plaintively, "to help you, sidi, to get your castle back into your own possession."

"To give me the pass-word, perhaps," said Ali, "or to open the gates secretly and by night?"

"Yes, sidi," answered Alula, simply, "both."

"It is rather a shameful thing," said the doctor, "to advise a daughter to betray her father."

"And," said she, evidently in great perplexity, "though men hate him as a Basha, he is a kind father."

The doctor thought that she might really repent



of her intention, and, half-ashamed of himself, he sought to persuade her to carry it out.

"It is said that all is fair in war, as in love."

"In war as in love? Yes," said she; "but what will become of me if I betray him again? He has discovered that it was I that released the Sidi Ali in London; he will discover this also, if I do it. What, then, shall I do? Where shall I go?"

"I promise," said Ali, "that the Lalla Alula shall be protected—that no harm of any kind shall happen to her I promise in the name of Allah the Most Merciful."

Alula gazed at him; that promise seemed scarcely to satisfy her. She gazed at the doctor, and her expression was full of trouble. There was undoubtedly a burden on her mind.

"There is another thing," said she, at length. "If I give the Sidi Ali the means of re-entering his castle, my father may fall into his hands. I have heard the Sidi Ali declare that he would take vengeance on those who were concerned in sending his brother to death. Of them the sidi knows that my father was one. I beg the sidi of his goodness to tell me: Would he kill my father? Or, would he spare him for my sake, and for the sake of what I have done, and may do?"



Ali considered a moment, and his brows were gathered in a deep fold of debate with himself. He looked up with decision.

"For thy sake, my Lalla," said Ali, "he shall be spared, he shall be forgiven, unless he should prove to be the person who discovered that we were in the doctor's house, and who received the price of my brother's life! That man, whatsoever he is," cried Ali, in such wrath as always swayed him when he spoke on the subject, "shall not be spared! He shall surely die!"

Alula closed her eyes and shuddered. But she spoke in a low voice.

"My father, then, need not die; for well I know he is not that man."

"How dost thou know?" demanded Ali, quick to seize anything that might set him nearer the track of the arch-culprit.

"Because," answered Alula, after a glance at the doctor, and an instant's hesitation, "I know that all that day my father went not out of his house."

So the subject dropped, and they resumed the question of admission to the castle.

"This night it must be done," said Alula, "in the dead sleep and deep darkness that precede the dawn. The pass-word for outposts and sentinels is 'Sabora.'



Enter the valley as if you came from Tangier. A Captain went out to-night to bring in more soldiers in the morning. Pretend that thou art that Captain, returned sooner than was expected. Come to the great gate. Push it, and it will yield; and Allah be your helper!"

Her daring mission thus performed, Alula wished to be gone. She begged that the doctor should accompany her, besides the scout who had brought her. As soon as they were well on the way, with the scout striding on ahead, it became apparent that Alula had another serious purpose in taking the dangerous journey to Ali's hiding-place.

"Where is Madame Neale?" she asked the doctor, in English. (Sometimes she forgot—perhaps, on purpose—to give Molly her new name.) "I did not see her with you."

The doctor said that she had gone to Tangier and Gibraltar on business, and would return in a day or two.

"Let her not return!" said Alula, with energy. "It will be better for her never to be seen again!"

"But why, Lalla?" asked the doctor, smiling; for, divining Alula's feeling towards Ali, he imagined that the advice was prompted merely by childish, half-barbarous jealousy.



"Oh, it is an awful thing I have to say, Sidi Doctor!" said she, in her excitement falling into her Moorish speech. "I fear to say it! I fear to hint it! I have been wicked, and I am punished by guessing what I would not know for all the world!"

"Hints? Guesses? What are these childish riddles, my Lalla, that frighten you, as if they were evil spirits?"

"They are, Sidi Doctor!" she declared. "Listen! On the very day that I was taken to my father's house in London by Prince Ali's wife, she opened and read to herself a letter in the carriage. She was greatly troubled—I could see—by the reading. Afterwards I discovered the letter in my bag; her hand had mistaken my bag for her own. I was astonished to see that the outside was superscribed to Prince Ali. I took the letter out. I should not have done that—it was wicked—but I did it, because I hated Madame Neale. I could not read it, because it was written in Arabic, and I had not been taught to read Arabic. But I kept it, determined to learn Arabic in order to read it. She came and asked if I had seen it, and I said 'No.' I am bitterly sorry I did that. I have learned to read Arabic a little, and I have read a few words of the letter. But I will read no more. It is a demon letter. It gives me



horrible dreams. I beg the Sidi Doctor to take the letter from me, and do with it what seems to him good!"

She took from her bosom and handed over the letter we know of. The doctor took it in silence and astonishment. Then she begged him to leave her that she might pass on her way more rapidly with the scout alone; for the bare-legged mountaineer could walk fast enough to keep pace with the trot of the ass.

The doctor, therefore, halted and let her go on as rapidly as her beast would permit. He wrapped his Moorish cloak close about him and drew the hood well over his head, and lay down under a strong-scented lentisk bush to await the return of the scout. His curiosity urged him to read the extraordinary letter which had been handed over to him. The moonlight was not strong enough to enable him to read; but, fortunately, he was still Englishman enough to carry matches. Crouching well under the bush, completely secure from the gentle attentions of the breeze that wandered about the mountains, he set himself to scratch his matches and to read the letter.

He noted the address on the envelope to Prince Ali; and then, with amazement and horror, he read the Arabic, of which the translation is as follows:



*"Praise to the One God.*

*"There is no strength nor power but in God Almighty, the Most High.*

*"In consideration of the service which I have rendered to His Shereefian Highness the Sultan by revealing to him the present dwelling-place of the notorious rebel Mohammed, Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan, I acknowledge to have received from the Imperial Treasury the sum of one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs."*

That was dated and signed in English:

*"Fez, April 24th, 189—.*

MARY NEALE."



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## HOW ALI WON HIS HOME AGAIN.

"It is a forgery!" the doctor exclaimed, angrily, to himself.

It was incredible that Molly Neale should have committed so detestable a crime. Besides, the signature was not in her hand, and the paper on which the extraordinary receipt was written was plainly of English make. Was it likely that English paper was to be had in the Imperial neighborhood where this was supposed to be written? And, if it were a forgery, what hand but a French one could have perpetrated it, for who but a Frenchman would think of naming a sum of Moorish money in francs?

Yet reflection gave him pause. Was it likely, if an original document of that sort existed, that it would be passing about in London from hand to post, and from post to hand? Might it not, then, be a copy? If it were a copy, who made it? and for



what purpose? The answer to these questions suggested themselves readily. De Courcel was its most likely maker and sender, and Ali was intended to be its receiver. Its purpose was to ruin Molly in Ali's eyes—in her husband's eyes, for at the date stamped on the envelope Molly was married. The doctor trembled to think what terrible issue there might have been had Ali received it, and he trembled still more to conceive what would happen should Ali read the document now, or should the revelation made in it be conveyed to him by word of mouth. Who could do that? He did not know; but if the guesses he had been making were well founded, then De Courcel could, and probably the Basha El Helba could. Also Alula could now, but in all likelihood she would not.

Thus, by a process of shrewd induction, the doctor arrived at almost all the truth. But he did not yet accept it as truth. He had a mind to tear the document up there and then and scatter the pieces on the wild mountain side, or, better still, to light another match and burn it.

But he caught sight of the returning scout footing it up the glen; and he folded the paper away, with the resolution that he would show it to Molly, and if it represented a terrible truth, he would warn her



of the extreme danger which threatened her. She might make light of it to herself if she thought of it at all; but it was like a deadly sword hung over her by a hair.

As the scout approached from the lower ground, Ali and his sharpshooters appeared from the higher—Ali himself, in his white woollen Moorish cloak, looking in the moonlight like a stalking ghost—and so the doctor had to suppress debate with himself concerning the Arabic document, and fall in with the attention which Ali and the rest were giving to the conduct of this midnight expedition. They had to make a long detour or curve behind the mountains that girt the valley and back again, so as to appear to the Basha's outposts and sentinels as if they had come from the direction of Tangier. That would take them some hours, and they had begun betimes.

Ali and his venturesome two hundred trudged on for hours by mountain ways that were no more than goat-tracks. When they were arrived at the point where they meant to return towards the valley, a scout came racing back with the news that there was a large party of armed Moors—some hundred or two—lying at a spot by which they would have to pass if they continued on their way. Since that



party might be the one which Alula had declared a Captain had gone out to assemble, it was advisable not only to avoid them, but to get ahead of them. Therefore, another detour was necessary. But Ali had the advantage of knowing every step of that ground, and every bush and rock that might afford concealment. So they advanced without hesitation and with forced speed; and at length, while it was yet dark, they arrived in the valley with a fair road before them. They did not try to avoid outposts, for that might have aroused suspicion. The first guards they came upon were grouped about a fire (the night was cold), and to keep themselves awake they were reciting, turn and turn about, verses from the Koran.

"Who goes there?" challenged the only member of the party who was erect and truly on guard, leaning on his long gun.

"The Captain who passed out hours ago to bring more men," said Ali.

"Give the word."

"Sabora."

"Pass on, Captain and men; and Allah be with you!"

It was well that the challenger was drowsy and careless, and that the rest of the sleepy guards



scarcely turned the tail of an eye upon them; for Ali's manner and appearance were little like those of a Moorish Kaid, and his hardy mountaineers, notwithstanding that they had drawn the hoods of their cloaks well over their heads, could never be mistaken by watchful eyes either for Arabs or for the riff-raff that composes the bulk of the Sultan's army. So Ali and his men hastened on. The individual sentinels that they came upon gave them no trouble. Sometimes they were asleep with their knees drawn up to their chins, and they were always drowsy. They glanced at Ali and his company without challenge, and with complete unconcern. These men, they probably thought, who were moving through the night, must have satisfied the guards of the outpost, and, therefore, their passage must be quite regular; and even if it were not, it was no affair of theirs, and sleep was better than exertion. Such are the ways of Moorish military discipline!

The valley was about four miles long and less than half as broad, and the castle towered up in the midst of it. Down the whole length of the valley flowed a stream which had been filled with the October rains, and along both banks the nondescript Imperial army was encamped, using the stream as drinking-trough, washbasin, bath, kitchen-sink and sewer. Ali



and his men kept clear of the stream and clear of the camp, clear of all but its ragged and frayed margin, which it was impossible to avoid. But they passed steadily on, unchallenged, unmolested. They were within half a mile or so of the castle when the noise of a hubbub rolled up behind them. There was the steady roar and roll of angry voices, out of which rose frequently sharp outcries. The fear seized Ali and his company that the real Captain with his recruits might have appeared, and that the noise might come from the pursuit of the impostors.

“Forward!” murmured Ali. “But with steady feet! Fear not!”

But there came a setback that nearly caused a panic among the mountaineers, for it is a very difficult thing to remain cool and courageous in face of an unexpected hindrance, while a ruthless enemy is probably raging up behind. When they approached the castle they saw that water from the stream had been let into an old and hitherto empty channel, so that the castle was now partly surrounded by a moat, over which a rude drawbridge of rough planks had been cast. The drawbridge was raised. They could, doubtless, cross the moat without its aid; but to do that would arouse suspicion if they should be seen, and cause the gate to be barred against them.



They must demand that the drawbridge should be lowered, whatever parley and delay might be provoked.

Ali passed round the word among his men to lie down flat on the ground, where their shapes in the darkness would be confounded with the scrub-bushes. Then he stepped forward with the doctor and one of the mountaineers and hailed the porters of the bridge.

“Holla! Ho! Bridge!”

The two cloaked figures that crouched asleep, one on each side of the raised bridge, bestirred themselves, and Ali called again.

“Who calls?” came back. “It is ordered that the bridge shall not be lowered till dawn. The Basha has said it, and, by the beard of the Prophet, our right hands would be chopped off if we dared to disobey.”

Ali put forward then no pretence of being the returned Captain, for he guessed that, although that pretence was good enough to pass the outposts, it would not avail for admission to the castle, where the recruits were not likely to be welcomed. He tried another device.

“Dolts,” he cried, “and sons of dolts! Listen! Do you not hear the growing turmoil behind us?”



We have news, news of moment for the Basha. The arch-rebel, Ali of Tetuan, has returned! What do you think the Basha will do to you if you do not admit the bearers of great news? He will cut your stupid heads off! I command you to lower then, at once, or death and Gehenna will be your portion!"

And the bridge was lowered. Ali and the doctor and the mountaineer passed over. Ali and the Berber amazed the porters by falling upon them and tying them up in their cloaks, while the doctor ran forward to push open the great gate, and the mountaineers (according to arrangement) rushed from their cover, and swarmed over the bridge and through the gate. Not a shot was fired, and but one man was killed—he was the only guard awake, and he was cut down with a sword—and the castle was in the hands of its rightful master.

The day had well dawned before those outside the castle gave any sign of surprise or suspicion. It was unusual that the great gate remained closed and the drawbridge raised; but that was not the affair of those encamped in the valley. It was likely that the Basha knew what he was about; it was even possible that he had overslept himself. But when the returned Captain came to report to the Basha, and saw guarding the raised drawbridge, not Moor-



ish soldiers at all, but stalwart and fierce Berbers who threatened to fire upon him, he fled and carried the news to the camp.

Then there came a great array of men, a mob of infantry in all kinds of dresses and with all sorts of weapons and horsemen tearing about at break-neck speed upon fine Arab horses, with cloaks of all gay colors flying behind them like banners in the wind. They flung up their guns and caught them again or twirled them round their heads, yelling: "Allah! Allah!" or each his individual battle-cry. "Room for the son of the black hero!" "Hassan! Hassan!" "Way there for the two black brothers!" "Room for the six-fingered champion, that can shoot standing!" That is the wild Moorish notion of cavalry display; which bears more resemblance to circus-riding than to warfare. These all worked gradually forward with a great noise. Their leaders rode up to the drawbridge and demanded to see the Basha El Helba. Ali showed himself above the gate.

"The Basha El Helba," he answered, in a loud voice, "is my prisoner—he and all that were here with him! I am Ali of Tetuan, the lord of this place! I have taken it from the Basha, and I mean to keep it!"



That was all. The leaders retired to consult with their fellows, and then, with renewed noise, with thumping of drums and blowing of shrill fifes, they flung themselves forward to attack. But long before they reached the ditch, or moat, the breechloaders in the hands of the Berber sharpshooters behind the wall spoke with a continuous rattle. The Moors fell by scores; and the mob fell back in dismay—for Moorish soldiers expect guns to make a good deal of noise, but not to do much damage.

The attack failed, and so did other attacks. For two days Ali thus held his castle against the Moorish army. But his ammunition was running short, and he prayed that the tribes he was expecting would come speedily in their thousands, bringing with them the cases he had been compelled to leave behind.

On the third day they came. They poured down into the valley with incredible fury, and swept the Sultan's horsemen and riff-raff out, and seized the whole of the Moorish camp and supplies.

They brought with them, not only the cases of ammunition, but twenty Green Turbans from Shashan, who had with them as prisoner the notable Son of France, and also Molly, the wife of the Grand Shereef, returned triumphant from her trip to



Tangier and Gibraltar. Her husband, the Prince, came down to the gate, a proud and handsome figure, lifted her from her ass, and embraced her before them all.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE DOCTOR QUESTIONS MOLLY.

DR. NEALE sought an interview at the earliest possible moment with Molly, the Princess Ali. He shrank from it with dread and something like horror, and yet he was drawn towards it with an overpowering curiosity and fascination. Molly could not (he declared to himself) be guilty; but if, by that extraordinary influence which impels poor human nature to do those things which it ought not to do—if she were guilty!—Heavens! what would come of it, in that savage land, away among people of unbridled passions, who were a law unto themselves? He remembered that Ali had shown himself during his stay in England and since gentle and amenable; but he did not forget his terrible outbursts of passion in Fez, and nothing would ever convince him that Ali was not, beneath the surface, still a barbarian.

“Molly,” said he, almost running against her in the beautiful pillared aisle of the great central court-



yard, "I want to speak to you alone—and very particularly."

"Sir," said she, in mock regal tones—she was in excellent spirits—"do you not respect my position?"

"Madame!" said he, bowing low. "Princess! Will you condescend to grant me the favor of a private interview?"

He meant his tone to be light, but it was serious in spite of his intention; and there was a look in his eye which sobered Molly and gave her pause.

"Come this way," said she.

They entered a delicately-tinted, beautifully-cushioned little room, which Molly had chosen to be especially her own. She sat down among her cushions, and motioned Dr. Dick to sit also. Her eyes roved around in speculation, yet ever returned to consider his serious face. His hand went to the decorated pouch which was slung over his Moorish tunic, and Molly's eyes followed the movement. He took a letter from the pouch, and handed it to her.

"Don't upset yourself when you see it," said he, gently; "but I would like you to tell me what you know of that, if you will be so good."

Molly recognized the envelope; recognized, too, the paper which the envelope contained. It was a terrible, a deadly, moment. She had imagined the



horrible document lost in London beyond recall, and—with its original destroyed, eaten, by herself—she had felt free altogether from the damning evidence of her crime, for, if she were put to it, she could deny that it had ever existed. Now here was the terrible accuser risen up in judgment against her again.

“Where did you get it?” she asked, with a look of death upon her face.

“It came into my hands quite lately,” answered the doctor. “I don’t think I am at liberty to say where I got it.”

“Has—Ali seen it?” The question was wrung out of her with pain.

The doctor was becoming involved in the horrid fear that the paper might be genuine. He could not look at her.

“I don’t think so,” he answered. “At any rate, I have not shown it to him, and I think if he had seen it, he’d have let us know!” He said that with significant emphasis, and Molly shuddered. “I had hoped, Molly,” he continued, sorrowfully and painfully, “that you would have declared the paper a shameful forgery. But you don’t. What must I think?”

Molly flung herself among her beautiful silk



cushions, and sobbed and wept as if her heart would break.

"It is true, then?" he asked, in a low, clear tone. For answer she only sobbed and wept more violently.

The doctor paced softly up and down on the shining tiled pavement—softly, because he was shod with the ordinary Moorish slippers. There was no sound for some time but the shuffling and the flap of these yellow things and the subdued sob that came from the cushions. The doctor was in such a situation as he had never known before, such a situation as mortal man seldom finds himself in. A charming woman—his brother's wife (he should say, widow)—had proved herself a criminal of the most abhorrent kind; and the secret of her crime was with him! What should he do? What could he do? What could any man do with the ordinary tender and chivalrous regard of an Englishman for a lady? And had he not always held her and treated her as his sister? What could he do but put away all evidence of the crime as a shameful thing?

"Give me the thing, Molly," he said, holding out his hand.

She turned to him piteously, with the paper tightly clenched between her fingers. "You will not betray me, Dick? Say you won't!"



"I won't betray you!" he answered, shaking himself almost contemptuously, and that in spite of himself. "I'm going to burn the thing!" He lit a match, and held both the paper and the envelope till they were consumed to the last corner, and his fingers were scorched.

"Oh, thank you, Dick!" she cried. "Thank you!" and she seized his hand and kissed it.

"O, Molly, Molly, Molly!" he broke out, "how could you do it? How could you sell the life of the good, brave young man?"

"I don't know!" she moaned. "I don't know, Dick!"

"It was the crime of Judas!" he went on, growing in passion and expression. "And he had the grace to go out and hang himself afterwards!"

"You are very hard on me!" said she.

"You were my brother's wife at the time," he continued, "and my guest. I suppose you understand that your act brought death to your husband as well?"

"Yes," she confessed, "oh, yes! But you don't—you can't—understand. I was very poor, and I never had any money. I was ambitious, and I never could do anything I wanted to do!"

"Well, by Jove!" he exclaimed, with bitterness,



“you’ve not been without money since! You made a good haul: ten thousand pounds for the two! And you’ve made a fine show! I suppose that’s what women live for!”

“I deserve,” said she, humbly, “that you should say such things to me! But I have spent very little of the money!”

“Heavens!” he exclaimed, turning about more fully towards her, “I suppose the five thousand pounds’ worth of money you’ve brought from Gibraltar for Ali is some of it?”

She did not answer.

“My God!” he cried, pacing up and down again, “if Ali should know that he has in his hand part of the price of his brother’s life!”

“You won’t tell him?” she exclaimed, in the wildest alarm.

“I won’t tell him!” said he. “But my advice to you—if I may offer it—is: Go away at once, back to England—anywhere—out of sight and reach of Ali! Flee from him, as you would from death!”

“I don’t want to flee from death,” she answered, boldly, “if death be my husband.”

“I don’t think,” said he, looking at her in some surprise, “that you fully understand your position. I have the firmest presentiment that it will all come



out! That," said he, suddenly remembering a point which he had intended to mention before, "that is only a copy, surely, that I have just burnt?"

"It is," she answered: "a copy made by De Courcel, to ruin me with Ali!"

"Then there is an original?"

"There is not now; it is gone, too."

"Are you quite certain of that?"

"Quite. I ate it. I thought it was burnt."

"By whom?"

"By De Courcel."

"Still that confounded French spy!" exclaimed the doctor. "I thought he was at the bottom of the shameful business!"

"You are mistaken, Dick," answered Molly. "He had nothing to do with it. He knew of it; and he has used his knowledge against me ever since, to get me to do what he wished—especially to prevail on Ali to be a French subject."

"And you have not done what he wished?" exclaimed the doctor. "Depend upon it, he will betray you yet. He's a scoundrel, and he won't forgive! I repeat my advice: Go away, and hide where neither Ali nor De Courcel can find you!"

"Oh, you don't understand!" broke out Molly, in a great wave of feeling. "You won't understand!"



I love my husband—love him beyond everything! And that is now my great punishment! My life is bound up with him, and I cannot cut myself off from him! If he cuts me off, I cannot help it! If he kills me, I will still love him! I care nothing now for money or for position! I care for nothing now but him! And I will not go away!”

The doctor listened with amazement. He was not in love himself, and he did not understand.

“In that case, my dear,” was all he could say, “God help you!”

Dr. Dick left her. He was perplexed, oppressed, and helpless. He hoped against hope that Ali might never know the terrible secret; but he feared that somehow it would come out. He thought it was a terrible, a monstrous thing, that Molly could have ever married Ali, and a more monstrous thing that she should continue to live with him. Yet what could he do to prevent it, since Molly would not take his advice? He could not conceive it to be his duty to denounce her, and bring upon her the vengeance of her husband.

But, for all that, vengeance was advancing upon Molly, and with neither slow nor halting foot. And it is a terrible fact that its action was precipitated by the mean and treacherous suggestion which Molly herself had made to Ali in Scotland.



At the close of the day—just as Miss Cameron had dreamed—Prince Ali called his prisoner De Courcel from his confinement.

“Ah, mon Prince,” said the Frenchman, expecting a friendly greeting, “I desire to congratulate you on your return to your ancestral château.”

He was dumbfounded by the Prince’s response to his politeness.

“Traitor—dog—spy of a Frenchman!” cried Ali, in a sudden blaze of wrath. “Now thou art in the power of those hands! Now will I know who sold my brother’s life! It may be that thou thyself art the traitor! But whoever he be, thou shalt tell me, or I will cut the secret from thy heart!”



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## DE COURCEL EXPLAINS.

MOLLY and Alula were both present at that scene, in the background. Alula, when she heard Ali's passionate address to De Courcel, uttered a scream, but clapped her hand upon it when half-emitted. Molly made no sound, but she turned deathly white. Too well did she remember that occasion in the Highlands of Scotland when, fearing what De Courcel might say to Ali, she subtly suggested that the Frenchman himself was probably the betrayer of Mohammed. Now she felt—she foresaw—that the treacherous suggestion she had let loose would turn for her own destruction.

“I ask nothing better, my Prince,” said De Courcel, in English. He spoke with spirit, for, whatever his defects, he was no coward. “With pleasure I will tell you who is the person that sold your brother's life. Your Highness cannot forget



that once I offered to give what you now demand. But your Highness then would not listen; you commanded me not to speak. I said: 'Well, I wait, and am silent until I give my proofs; my evidences, my pieces of justification.' I am ready, my Prince. But, you will excuse me, this courtyard, open to all the world, is not a proper place for the hearing. Let me be heard in your council hall, if you please, my Prince."

That was said carelessly, almost sarcastically, and the Prince's sole reply was to turn and lead the way in. So they passed from the open court with its plashing fountain to the hall of audience and council. Ali was in an unusual state of excitement and solemnity at the prospect of discovering at last what he had so long desired to know. He marched in with his head erect and his eyes forward, and he seated himself on the divan that was along one side of the room, in his usual place of audience and judgment. He did not note who else was in the room, but kept his eyes fixed upon the Frenchman.

De Courcel looked around him. He saw only the two stalwart Berber guards that stood at his elbows, and the reassembled household of Shereefs and notables who counted it their privilege and their duty to attend upon their Grand Shereef and Prince.



Dr. Neale still lingered without, to urge a last desperate word of counsel upon Molly.

"You must see what is coming," he said. "Don't go in; keep away. Hide anywhere out of his sight. He will be at the first like a madman. We may bring him round later."

Molly knew too well that by "he" the doctor meant her husband.

"I won't go away," she said, as she had said before. "He may kill me, but I will keep near him."

Fear, the weakness of nature, dragged her feet back; but resolution, the strength of the mind, pushed her forward. She entered the hall, and the doctor followed in a turmoil of uncertainty and horror.

"*Bien!*" murmured De Courcel, when he saw Molly appear.

Molly boldly went forward and took her seat by the Prince as his consort. The Shereefs scowled at such forwardness, but Molly, even in her desperation, would not abandon an Englishwoman's right to be regarded as her husband's equal. Alula stood a long way off, and dared hardly peep in at the arched doorway.

"Let the Captain De Courcel now speak," said Ali. "I listen."



"If the Basha El Helba is in the castle, my Prince, as I have heard he is," said the Frenchman, "let him be called in, if it please you."

There was an anxious pause till the Basha appeared, guarded by two big negro slaves with drawn swords. He looked anxious and furtive like a trapped thief; but he had more of the goat's appearance than ever, of a goat that has had a beating and whose lip trembles half in fear, half in derision. He appeared surprised, and then troubled, to see De Courcel there, and it was plain he wondered what was afoot—his own trial or the Frenchman's?

"The Basha El Helba," said De Courcel, beginning to speak in Moorish, "knows this matter as well as I. I will make my statement," he continued, very much in the manner of a French Public Prosecutor, "and the Basha will contradict me if I am wrong."

"Let the truth only be spoken," said Ali, severely, "and beware of all false accusation."

"The truth only shall be spoken, sidi," said De Courcel. "In Fez," he began, "on a certain day six months ago, a woman rode through the dust and heat of the city to the Palace of his Shereefian Highness the Sultan. Many men saw her and knew who she was, for she was unveiled. She was an Englishwoman."



Ali began to give a more rigid attention.

“She inquired the way—I heard her—to the house of the Sid’ El Helba, who was then at the head of the Sultan’s domestic affairs, and with whom I had the honor of being friendly. She was admitted into the house of the Sid’ El Helba. I was still standing in the same place, thinking of the singular coming of the Englishwoman at that hour of the day, when a messenger came to me from the Sid’ El Helba asking me to go and have a word with him. I appeal to the Basha. Is not that true?”

“It is true,” said the Basha, “as the words of childhood. I did send for you to come, and you came.”

“The Sid’ El Helba,” continued De Courcel, “received me in his private closet and spoke quickly. He told me that there had come to him a daughter of the English with a most important secret to sell, but she would not impart it until she saw before her the promised sum in English or French banknotes and gold. He begged me to take an order on the Sultan’s Treasury to the Jewish banker Aaron, who is a French-protected subject, and get English or French money from him, and to use my European eyes to ensure that the money was true. Is that not so?” asked De Courcel, turning to the Basha.



"It is as the Captain has stated," said the Basha.

"Proceed, proceed," said Ali, "and come to the matter. All this is not to the purpose."

"I went to Aaron and returned with the money, and counselled the Sid' El Helba to demand the signature of the woman to a document acknowledging the receipt of the money. He took counsel with me as to the form of that, and revealed to me that the woman had promised that the arch-rebel, Mohammed, the Grand Shereef and Prince of Tetuan, should be in the Sultan's hands that night."

"Proceed!" said Ali, with one hand plucking at his red beard. "Who was the woman?"

"Permit me, my Prince," said De Courcel, "to tell you what happened in its order. At the request of the Sid' El Helba I drew up a receipt in the Arabic language. It was set before the woman——"

De Courcel paused; plainly his nerve had gone. Ali had not taken his eyes from him for an instant since he had begun to speak. He had assumed more and more a forward crouching and threatening position as of a beast preparing to spring.

"And she set her name to it, you would say!" he cried, when the Frenchman paused. "What name? What name?" he yelled, leaping to his feet and brandishing his fists.



The Frenchman was speechless. He stood amazed and terror-stricken, as if he conceived that Ali had gone mad.

"What name?" he cried again. He suddenly leaped forward and seized De Courcel with both hands and shook him. "Dog! Liar! Lying son of a lying people! Thou torturest me with thy words, and now thou wouldst torture me with thy silence! what name?"

*"Mary Neale!"*

But De Courcel did not utter it. He could not have uttered it so clearly as it sounded. It was not evident who had uttered it; it seemed as if the name suddenly lived in the empty air, and that was all. But the name provoked Ali to a frenzy. He still maintained his hold of the Frenchman, who was as a rag doll in his hands.

"Traitor! Torturer!" he cried. "Thou shalt prove it! Thou shalt show me the paper! Show me the name, or I will tear you all to pieces!"

He flung the Frenchman on the tiled floor, and he would have stamped on him in his fury, had not Dr. Neale and some of the Shereefs dashed forward, restrained Ali, and borne the Frenchman out unconscious.

"Let all go forth," said a clear voice, "and leave Prince Ali with me."



It was Molly who spoke. She stood erect and rigid by the dais, and waited till the hall was clear and she was alone with her husband. When they were alone, but several paces apart, they gazed for some seconds each in the face of the other, then Molly's eyes dropped and her head hung.

"Why dost thou veil thy bright eyes and hang thy fair head?" asked Ali, in a mournful and desolate voice. "Art thou that woman the French spy spoke of? Art thou the wicked woman that sold my dear brother to his cruel enemies?"

She made a gesture of entreaty and of desire to go near him.

"Stand away!" he cried, holding up his hand and violently motioning her back. "Come not near! Thou art to me but a loathsome toad, a poisonous serpent that I have for some months cherished in my bosom—if thou art that woman! Answer me!" he cried, with a stamp. "Art thou the woman?"

Again she hung her head.

"Confession is in that," he said. "Allah be my witness, but I must believe confession is in that."

"I have long bitterly, bitterly repented," said Molly. "Canst thou not forgive me, Ali?"

"Forgive?" he cried. "When Allah shall forgive the demons of Gehenna, then may I forgive thee, the betrayer of innocent blood!"



"Then," said she, as if her last hope were going, "you love me no more?"

"Love thee?" he cried. "I loathe thee! And if I loved thee, is the common love of thee—a woman!—to be set against the sacred love of my brother, who was to me more beautiful than all women?"

"Enough!" said she, looking on him with deadly calm. "If you love me not, there is no more for me."

"Ask me not for pity!" he cried.

"Pity?" she cried, with stung pride. "Thou art a barbarian to speak of pity! Pity is for animals. I am thy wife, thy equal! If there is no hope that thou mayest forgive—I have sinned terribly, monstrously! I repent bitterly, with tears that sear my heart; but if there can be no forgiveness with thee, I have finished. My life is nothing to me without thy love, Ali. Kill me, but do not rail."

She glanced at him and abandoned hope; the fever of hatred and vengeance was burning in his eyes and trembling in his fingers.

He clenched his hands together. "True," said he, "railing is of no avail. A man does not scold a beast that must be destroyed. I cannot lay hands on thee to take thy life, because—because I have embraced thee in love. Thou shalt die by other hands than mine. Thou shalt be driven forth. Ha!"



He paused and sniffed the air, which flowed freely in from the courtyard from the open valley. The breeze, as it wandered in, brought a strange odor, an odor as from a menagerie of wild beasts or as from a herd of filthy he-goats—an odor which, at its faintest, was like that of a crowd of negroes. With the odor there was borne on the wind a droning or humming sound, with intermittent yells.

“The Aissowie!” murmured Ali, with a kind of awe, and strode to the door, leaving his wife standing.



## CHAPTER XXX.

## THE AISSOWIE.

THE Aissowie are known all over the land of the Moors, from Tangier to Marakesh. They are a fanatical sect of Mohammedans who claim to have the special protection and inspiration of God. They are something like the whirling and howling Dervishes of the farther East, something also like the Shakers of this country and America. They believe in a life of prayer and of possession by the spirit; and they dance and whirl together to promote in each other the religious ecstasy, while they slash themselves with knives, and eat iron and glass, to show that they are proof against harm since they are protected by Heaven. Their centre is at Fez, where they have a great mosque for worship, and from thence their saints and preachers, their leaders and captains, make yearly pilgrimages throughout the land to encourage the brotherhood and to win recruits.

Word had been brought to Ali the day before



that the Aissowie were coming, and that they would visit the castle to pay their respects to the Grand Shereef, who, from his high position among Moham-medans, is an honorary head of the brotherhood. They were come, a filthy, evil-smelling band, and they provoked an idea in Ali's frenzied brain.

The drawbridge was down, the great gate was open, and the saints of God, as they called themselves, came in, swaying and moaning, chanting and yelling, in their religious fever. They were a closely-packed crowd; and at first nothing much was apparent but a waving mass of hooded heads, amid which shone some shaven skulls, cut and bleeding. But as they pressed into the great courtyard, a certain regularity in the movement of the heads became manifest. They broke into a double throng to encompass the fountain, they formed a circle about the fountain, and they formed also an outer circle which came slowly whirling towards Ali, the Grand Shereef, who stood plainly visible in his white cloak and green turban. They swayed rhythmically, but the rhythm and accord were in their spirits, for they were not in the sounds they uttered.

"Brothers," called Ali, in a loud voice, "there is a traitor in this house! Find the traitor! There is a seller of innocent blood! Find the seller!"



The whirling circles took up the words, and in a moaning chant repeated them: "There is a traitor in this house! Brothers, find the traitor! There is a seller of innocent blood! Brothers, find the seller!" And they continued to whirl and sway faster and faster and to moan and cry louder and louder.

The whole household of the castle stood around, fixed like stocks and stones with terror and fascination; for these evil-smelling, but saintly, Aissowie, being possessed by the Divine Spirit, were believed to be able to detect, to "smell out," all kinds of evil-doing and treachery. It became a grotesque but terrible game, as of blindman's buff, terrible because of the terror of the spectators, who stood trembling, and allowed themselves to be pawed and breathed over by the nauseous, horrible creatures whom they imagined to be filled with the Spirit of God.

"Find, brothers! Find!"

With their heads swaying backwards and forwards, stepping in cadence, holding each other by the hand, the arm, or the shoulder, and maintaining a low, angry murmur, broken by groans and sighs and agonized cries of "Allah! Allah!" they passed round.

They encouraged each other to renewed exertion, and became more and more fierce and distracted.



And, as they failed to find, they would burst all together into a shrill and deadly cry as of mortal terror, and then they would move and sway on again in their weird, monotonous dance, weeping, and groaning, and lamenting, under the awful compulsion of the Infinite Spirit. Some were livid and convulsed, as with fever or epilepsy; their sightless eyes were starting from their sockets, their teeth chattered, and their lips quivered and foamed. Others were illuminated with a rapt and deathly smile of idiotic beatitude, and others still showed only the whites of their eyes, were pallid and stiff, and moved like galvanized corpses.

“Find, brothers! Find!”

And as they still did not find, they became more and more giddy in their motions and frantic in their looks and gestures. They tottered and swayed, and ran to and fro like drunken men, uttering hideous and obscene sounds—the grunting of swine, the harsh laughter of hyenas, the melancholy bark of jackals, any sound but a sane human cry.

“Find, brothers! Find!”

At last two women—for there were women among them—in draggled white, with streaming, dishevelled hair, and the faces of furies, dashed past Ali where he stood on the threshold of the hall, as if



with a half-conscious desire to defend it. The whole crowd swayed and pressed and followed, as a flock of sheep follows one of its members that has found or has made an opening in a fence.

“Find, brothers! Find!”

It was a cry of triumph then, as they spied Molly still standing white and rigid by the dais, like a bride by the altar. The two furies, with a wild yell, flew at her, and in a second or two she was the centre of an obscene, surging throng. She stood erect and defiant and white, till they began to tear the garments from her tender flesh. The consummation of her punishment was too abominable. The bitterness of desertion and base death was upon her, and she gave vent to a heartrending cry:

“O, Ali!”

Then a fierce revulsion of feeling swept through Ali's breast. If he was a barbarian he was generous, if he was half a savage he was wholly a man. He saw the woman standing white whom he had loved and embraced in love, he saw her gleaming bare shoulders as the obscene furies plucked at her, he heard her terror-stricken appeal to him, and he bounded in among the stinking mass of saintliness and fanaticism. He was strong, and fearless; and fierce. He struck down without hesitation or re-



morse those who were in his way and trampled on them. But to tell the truth, they opposed him little: and they bowed down under his blows, for was he not the Grand Shereef and a leader of their order?

"Ah, my beautiful one!" he cried, impetuously. "I come to thee, my dear sinner!"

He flung off the furies, as if they were huge disgusting leeches, and took Molly in his arms, where she trembled and clung. But while his back was thus turned, an old, old man with a knife, and the visage of distracted Lear, tottered forward and fell upon Molly with his gleaming weapon. Ali flung off the old wretch, and you could hear his bare skull crack on the tiled floor. There was a hushed pause among the fanatics.

"Oh!" gasped Molly, turning her eyes on her husband. "That is death, I know! Say quickly you forgive me, my husband, my lord, and I die happy! I am very, very sorry for what I have done!"

"Sweet sinner," said Ali, "I forgive!" He kissed her on the lips—at which action there arose from the swaying, maddened throng a howl of rage and horror. "But I shall die with thee!" added Ali.

He laid her on the dais, and was about to rise, when another old man, who might be the brother



of him who had been flung off, rushed at him with the roar of a beast, and struck him with a knife. He would have struck again, had not a form, swift and beautiful as a tigress, slipped between him and his victim. It was Alula, unarmed, but blazing with fury. She thrust off the old man, and stood erect, protecting Ali.

“Go forth, vermin, scum!” she cried.

She was like one possessed—like one of the Aissowie themselves. But in her madness she had a touch of craft. She took the two furies by the hand and led them out of the hall, the whole crowd following, swaying and dancing again, moaning and crying.

“Found, brothers! Found!”

In a little while they were out of the castle and the courtyard, and streaming away down the valley.

The whole episode had taken less than half-an-hour. It came, surged, and was gone; and the only evidence that it had not been a vividly evil dream was the dead body of Molly on the dais of the hall, and the wounded Ali sitting by.

Dr. Neale, who had been shut away with the damaged De Courcel in another part of the castle, knew nothing of the terrible scene till it was past.



That evening there rode in haste into the valley a numerous cavalcade. At its head was Sir Edward, the English Ambassador, and of the company was Miss Cameron, the seer of visions and practitioner of palmistry. They rode into the castle and were received by the doctor in Ali's name; for Ali had been put to bed with his wound in a raging fever, and he was being nursed by the devoted Alula.

"I always thought," said Miss Cameron, "that girl was in love with him."

Then it became evident—from the story of the Ambassador and Miss Cameron, which the dead Molly might have corroborated—that it was love also that had brought Miss Cameron so far. For once she had seen a vision without being prompted. She had dreamed that she had seen her friend, De Courcel, lying prostrate on a shining floor, while a ferocious man in a green turban stood over him with a gleaming scimitar. Her vision had so much affected her, and her concern for her friend, De Courcel, was so overwhelming, that she came with all speed to Tangier to tell her dream to the Ambassador and to seek his advice.

"And have you, an Englishwoman, or, at least, a Scotswoman," exclaimed the frank Dr. Dick, "come all this way to find an unworthy Frenchman?"



"Sad, isn't it?" said Miss Cameron. "But I have always had a weakness for things that were unworthy my attention—like my poor friend, the Princess!"

"It grieves me," said the Ambassador, "that I have not been in time to save the lady from the attack of these obscene creatures. She was a brave and charming creature, and extremely devoted to her husband."

"Yes," said the doctor, with hesitation. "But, on the whole, it is as well as it is. She would not have lived happily with her husband." (That was his only allusion to her terrible crime.) "Those mixed marriages are always a mistake in the end."

The Ambassador said nothing, for a little; for he was of the doctor's opinion regarding such marriages. At length he spoke.

"If Ali wishes to settle down among his own people comfortably, he had better marry that love-smitten girl who followed him to England, and who's nursing him now. That would compose his quarrel with her father, and do away with all trouble he might have with the Sultan's Government."

"I quite agree with you," said the doctor. "Poor, poor Molly!" he murmured, presently. "Poor Princess!"




“Yes,” said the sympathetic Ambassador, “poor Princess Molly!”

But he did not understand Dr. Neale’s deep, insistent tone of commiseration.

**THE END.**



# THE MANHATTAN LIBRARY.



**A Series of Books comprising new copyright Fiction, and Translations of New Books, by Foreign Authors. It is the purpose of the Publishers to include in this series only works of exceptional merit written by authors of established reputation.**

---

## **AN ILL WIND. By Mrs. H. Lovett Cameron.**

AN ILL WIND is a delightful love story, full of incident from start to finish. The conversations are bright and fascinating, and hold the reader's attention. There is a great mystery concerning a ring of certain workmanship. The plot is cunningly laid and intensely interesting. The story is well told, and the story one that every reader will enjoy.

## **A DESPERATE GAME. By Florence Warden.**

This is a very interesting story with just enough mystery to absorb the attention, and it appeals to a large class of readers. One is anxious to read on and on, with the hope that the conspirators will be exposed, and that the rightful persons will at last come into their inheritance, which also means a happy ending to each one's love affairs. There is much of conspiracy and plot in this story, and the adventurers are matched by the efforts of others to outwit and overcome their efforts. The story will hold the reader's interest to the end. The author's reputation justifies the reader's expecting a very interesting story.

## **THE MASTER OF BEECHWOOD. By Adeline Sergeant.**

This is a remarkably interesting story. The author has the gift of making every page hold the attention. There are no tiresome descriptions; the conversations are bright and sparkling. The plot is good, and is overflowing with incidents which keep the reader in a state of expectation to the end. The scene shifts from Australia to England. The story tells of friendship, love, hatred, complications, and passionate strife, all of which ends happily.

## **THE GREEN TURBANS. By J. MacLaren Cobban.**

This is a well-told story. The scenes are laid in Morocco, and have the flavor of foreign conditions and descriptions. The author has an exceptionally fine command of language. There are many descriptions of character, and foreign scenes, which are told in a very interesting manner. At various points of the story the interest is intense and dramatic. The situations and incidents are of extreme interest, and true to life. The story will be appreciated by both men and women readers.

---

**NEW TITLES WILL BE PUBLISHED AT SHORT INTERVALS.**

**Price bound in paper covers, 50c. Price in cloth binding, \$1.**

---

For sale by all booksellers, or will be sent to any address postpaid, on receipt of price by the publishers, **A. L. BURT COMPANY, 52-58 Duane St., New York.**



















MAY 28 1902

1 COPY DEL. TO CAT. DIV.

MAY 28 1902

JUN. 2 1902

LB Ag '12



# THE GREEN TURBANS

---

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN

---



---

THE MANHATTAN LIBRARY  
OF NEW COPYRIGHT FICTION

---

A. L. BURT COMPANY, &  
PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK &











**B**E sure to see the Mehlin Piano before purchasing. It contains more valuable improvements than any other.

**W**E invite the closest inspection of our instruments. Sold for Cash or on Easy Payment System.

**Branches or Agencies in the following Cities:**

Mobile, Ala.	Marcus, Iowa.	Ann Arbor, Mich.	Paterson, N. J.
Danbury, Conn.	Emporia, Kans.	Houghton, Mich.	Trenton, N. J.
Hartford, Conn.	Leavenworth, Kans.	Chillicothe, Mo.	Adams, N. Y.
Middletown, Conn.	New Orleans, La.	Joplin, Mo.	Albany, N. Y.
New Haven, Conn.	Baltimore, Md.	New Berne, N. C.	Auburn, N. Y.
Norwich, Conn.	Boston, Mass.	Washington, N. C.	Binghamton, N. Y.
Chicago, Ill.	Fall River, Mass.	Concord, N. H.	Castile, N. Y.
Wilmington, Del.	Springfield, Mass.	Manchester, N. H.	Corning, N. Y.
South Bend, Ind.	Worcester, Mass.	Asbury Park, N. J.	Gloversville, N. Y.

# Mehlin

## PIANOS

Are considered by expert judges to be the finest pianos now made. They are certainly creating more favorable comment than any others, and justly so because of their superior merit

**Branches or Agencies in the following Cities:**

Ithaca, N. Y.	Rochester, N. Y.	Zanesville, O.	Sharon, Pa.
Liberty, N. Y.	Syracuse, N. Y.	Brookville, Pa.	Columbia, S. C.
Middletown, N. Y.	Walton, N. Y.	Harrisburg, Pa.	Houston, Texas.
Ogdensburg, N. Y.	Watertown, N. Y.	Honesdale, Pa.	Waco, Texas.
Oneida, N. Y.	Cleveland, O.	Lewistown, Pa.	Brattleboro, Vt.
Ossining, N. Y.	Columbus, O.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Vergennes, Vt.
Peekskill, N. Y.	Fayette, O.	Pittsburg, Pa.	Lynchburg, Va.
Port Jervis, N. Y.	Painesville, O.	Reading, Pa.	Roanoke, Va.
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.	Youngstown, O.	Scranton, Pa.	Milwaukee, Wis.

*And many other places not mentioned above*

**If we are not represented in your vicinity, please write to us direct**

**Main Factory**  
461-467 W. 40th St.  
Cor. 10th Avenue  
New York

For Illustrated Catalogue and Full Particulars apply to

**MEHLIN & SONS**  
Main Office and Warerooms  
27 Union Sq., New York

**Finishing Factory**  
615-619 10th Ave.  
Cor. 44th Street  
New York























**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**



00022222065

